

THE SOUTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS:
ADDRESSING CLERGY CRISIS PRODUCED BY
SALARY AND MOVING ALLOWANCE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
GLOSSARY.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER	
1. MINISTRY FOCUS:.....	3
2. STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL.....	16
3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION.....	31
4. METHODOLOGY.....	64
5. FIELD EXPERIENCE	71
6. REFLECTION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	84
APPENDIX	
A. PRE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	91
B. POST QUESTIONNAIRE.....	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	102

ABSTRACT

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The objective of this qualitative action research project is to identify and assist ordained clergy and/or spouses living in the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in addressing crisis associated with being the recipients of compensation packages and moving allowance. After defining the nature and significance of the crises in its ministerial, biblical, historical, and theological contexts, an intervention procedure will be defined, implemented and evaluated. The direct approach of intervention will emphasize nurturing and radical listening. It is believed that the intervention sessions can positively affect behavioral growth/changes and stimulate the participants to accept ownership for their financial situations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful for those who have contributed to this project with their prayers, and encouragement. Its birth is the culmination of efforts by many individuals who have impacted my personal and professional journey. I am profoundly thankful to each of you.

To Dorris, my loving wife goes appreciation for your patience and understanding of the added responsibilities that I had as I was working on this project. Your spoken and unspoken support contributed so much to this accomplishment. Words will never express the positive impact they constantly provided during difficult days. I thank God for you and your love.

To my darling daughter, who faithfully asked me when I was going to complete my project, *thanks* are in order. *Boo* I finally made it. Your support and confidence in me will never be forgotten. I love you dearly.

To Bill, what a friend God has blessed me to have like you. Thanks for your presence and encouragement throughout these years of labor associated with this endeavor. The confidence you expressed kept me striving when I really wanted to give in. Your words often came just when I needed them and your assistance has made this project a reality.

To Dr. Way, expressions of gratitude are in order because of you stepping in as my mentor when I had been left alone. You have been a lifesaver, and very consistent even with the outside challenges we have experienced since you became my mentor. Your guidance and suggestions have stimulated me to become a broader thinker and

better listener. I felt from the first time we met in your city that somehow this project would come to fruition. I pray that God will continue to bless you to be a blessing to others.

To Dr. Sylvester, it is with thanks and appreciativeness for your insight. You were not just eyes, but also a voice that shared your experience in research, and critical thinking in the area of the impact of church finances on clergy and their spouse.

To Elder William Wright, the President of the Southwest Regional Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, I express thanks for your financial and moral support in completing this endeavor. You were more supportive than any of my previous administrators and I will never forget your acts of kindness.

GLOSSARY

Congregationalist Pastors. Three Congregationalist pastors were interviewed as resources to compare their remuneration package and moving allowance to those of the clergy *in* South Central Conference. The Congregationalist clergy will become a part of the project only for resource purposes.

Constituents. Are the members that makeup the congregations of the South central Conference.

Crisis. The word crisis derives from the ancient Greek word meaning *to decide*. A crisis is a situation that compels one to make a decision.¹ The crisis addressed will be what Clinbell calls, *Accidental Crises*. This type of crisis is “precipitated by unexpected losses of what one regards as essential sources of need satisfaction.”² For this project, *Accidental Crises* will also include crises that may manifest themselves after the first time clergy and their spouse relocate.

Forms of crisis addressed in this document that is considered accidental are:

- A. Securing employment for the spouse
- B. Securing affordable housing
- C. Securing affordable Day Cares for children
- D. Maintaining the same living level

Focus Group. Fifteen married pastors were chosen to become the focus group for this project. These individuals met the following prerequisites: (1) Pastored congregations of 500 or more members; (2) Had a minimum of five years pastoral experience; (3) Were ordained to the gospel ministry in the South Central Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination.

Moving Allowance. This includes only the mileage (.38 per mile), per diem (\$38.00 per day), hotel allotment, and the benefits that the conference provides above the remuneration package when the clergy and his family are relocating to another pastoral assignment within the conference.

Pastoral Care. It is not only counseling but also radical listening, which is a major component of this project.

Parent Organization. Is the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination’s Headquarters located in Silver Springs, Maryland. This is the entity that sets policies associated with the compensation package and moving allowance for the entire denomination and expects the conferences to follow.

Radical Listening. Is when focusing on listening to a story has established pastoral care as concerned about particularity and the non-reducibility of one human into another.³

¹Laura Day, *Welcome to Your Crisis: How to Use the Power of Crisis to Create the Life You Want*. (New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2006), 10.

²Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 187.

³Peggy Way, *Created by God* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2005), 6.

Remuneration. The remuneration (compensation, salary) package is referenced; it includes all the clergy's income (automobile mileage, automobile depreciation, and retirement which is (\$2,400 per month). Remuneration is not referring to additional monies for the clergy for life insurance, education subsidies, bonuses, or any other funds received by the worker that is above the monthly income. Neither does the remuneration include social security, federal or state income taxes, paid for the clergy since they are considered self-employed.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist has produced financial assistance for its clergy and their spouse when requested to relocate to different areas of pastoral responsibility. These occurrences may transpire at any time during the clergy's tenure in an assigned church (district) as deemed necessary by conference administration. One such example was when the writer pastored in Huntsville, Alabama at the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church. He had pastored that church for only two years when the administration of the conference requested that he move to Birmingham, Alabama to another church. This particular move was very difficult on the writer's family financially and the assistance from the conference did not meet these sudden changes which created a crisis.

South Central Conference has historically believed that it provides adequate compensation (salary) and moving allowances for its clergy that offsets the expenses incurred as a result of pastoral relocation. However, it has been shared that many of the clergy and their spouses have experienced crisis due to the inadequate salary and limited financial assistance given by the conference. This project will provide a model for addressing the crises that have emerged from the inadequate pastoral compensation packages and their subsequent moving allowance.

Thus, it is the writer's goal to initiate dialogue among Adventist pastors impacted by Conference policies on salary, housing, and moving allowance. This dialogue will

name and care for clergy frustrations and provide processes and theological feedback to the Conference, particularly about a theology of tithing and sacrifice.

Chapter One outlines the Ministry Focus in light of the writer's life, ministry, context, and events that create personal financial crises in ministry in the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventism. This backdrop establishes the statement of the problem and the need for a paradigm shift.

Chapter Two presents the ministry model, the diversity of the pastoral group, and the problem statement.

Chapter Three presents the Biblical and Theological foundations on which this project is founded.

Chapter Four presents the definition of sacrifice from a biblical perspective; it will also focus on the theological component of sacrifice in the context of South Central Conference.

Chapter Five presents the methodology and the design of the model used for intervention.

Chapter Six presents the reflections, summery, and the conclusion of the project.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

This chapter outlines the author's ministry focus in light of his life, ministry, context, and the personal financial crisis experienced as a pastor in the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventism. From the author's ministry focus emerges the commonality between pastor and people which provides the basis for problem solving. Ultimately a replicable model of ministry will be developed for use across all protestant denominational lines.

The ministry focus identifies a general ministry issue and drills it down to a specific concern that affects the place where the pastor engages ministry. This particular ministry focus will illuminate systemic issues of an ordained clergy family and the institution of our which he commits his life to sacrificial ministry for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The specific issue to be uncovered is the inequity in clergy compensation and moving allowance provide by the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist. The writer's Spiritual Autobiography will describe how God has prepared and led him to this point in his ministry journey. The contextual analysis identifies the demographic specifics out of which the writer currently performs ministry.

SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The writer's journey commenced in Lexington, Kentucky resulting from the marriage of Joe S. Grider and Mollie Twyman. He was born in 1950. His family

consisted of four siblings; three boys and a younger sister. He was the oldest child, but often wished this was not the case because of the awesome expectations placed on him by his parents to care for his younger siblings.

Both of the writer's parents were from Glasgow, Kentucky. Neither was able to finish high school or obtain any other formal education. They were hard workers and provided for their family by working a variety of jobs. Both were willing to do whatever was demanded to provide the necessities for their family.

The writer's mother was a very special person. She worked primarily as a maid yet, was still able to be a tremendous mother. As the writer reflects on his time at home, his mother seemed to have more energy after work than one could imagine. His mother made sure their home was neat and clean in spite of not having modern furniture. Dinner meals were prepared daily and special meals were prepared on Sunday's. The writer's mother also mended and made clothing for her children when time permitted.

The writer's father was a hard worker who believed in providing for his family. Despite educational and physical challenges, the writer's father pulled his own weight by turning his deficiencies into assets. The writer's father developed polio as a child and lived with it as an adult. This crippling condition challenged the writer because his father was not able to perform functions like his class-mates and neighborhood friends.

The writer remembers how much his father loved baseball, and would often sit on the porch and toss balls with him and his brothers. Playing catch was a cherished memory the writer maintains about his relationship with his father.

As the writer reflects on his early childhood, he remembers attending the Greater Liberty Baptist Church with his parents at the age of six or seven. While at a Sunday

Morning worship service, he sensed the call of God to the Gospel Ministry as the pastor was preaching. However, the writer did not literally respond to the gospel call for over fifteen years. During those years he began to observe ministers and everything associated with the pastoral ministry.

During his adolescent years, it was the writer's desire to be accepted by his peers. In school he always wanted to be a part of any group, but was seldom the leader, and perhaps that is why he is driven to become the most effective leader possible. The writer believes that an individual can become a tremendous leader if he or she is willing to allow God to direct their lives, and if they have the opportunity to be mentored by a great leader. With this rationale, the writer has attempted to associate with the most effective leaders in his denomination and has been fortunate to be acquainted with leaders in other disciplines outside of the Gospel Ministry.

During his junior year of High School, God blessed the writer to meet Dorris. She came into his life at a time when, in retrospect, he needed a true friend. They quickly grew to love each other. She loved the Lord, His Word, and was a committed Christian. She was not only spiritual, she; was physically attractive and very intelligent. After dating for a couple of years they were married.

Marriage to Dorris encouraged the writer to accept Christ as his personal Savior and to become a committed Christian in the Lima Drive Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lexington, Kentucky. Dorris and the writer became extremely supportive of their local Church and the denomination worldwide. It was during his membership at Lima Drive Seventh-day Adventist Church that the writer began to think seriously about the Gospel Ministry. The consideration to follow Jesus caused the writer to question his occupation

and employment with the International Business Machines Corporation (IBM). These questions created a tension in his life spiritually and occupationally.

When IBM transferred the writer from Lexington, Kentucky to Longmont, Colorado, the Holy Spirit reminded him of his calling and continued to encourage him to pursue the pastoral ministry. This encouragement culminated with a dream, and his acceptance of the calling that led him to pursue the Gospel Ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The writer then returned to school in order to be more educationally prepared to lead God's People in the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide. The pursuit of theological education required the writer to move to Huntsville, Alabama, and attend Oakwood College. This was something Dorris was willing to do, but very apprehensive about.

The writer and his family arrived in Huntsville, Alabama in 1975, and he immediately enrolled at Oakwood College and continued until graduation in June 1979. His emphasis was in the field of pastoral ministry with a minor in biblical language. The four years at Oakwood College were indescribably difficult for the writer's entire family. They were under enormous stress while he attended Oakwood College predominately due to a drastic financial change. This was evidenced by their inability to purchase or even rent a house. Their finances forced them to live in government-subsidized housing. This was traumatic for their entire family; especially for Dorris, and Greg, his son because they were in this situation because of the writer's decision to answer the call of God on his life and enter the pastoral ministry.

The impact of the relocation on Greg was evident in the quality of his education. His grades dropped drastically immediately after the family arrived in Huntsville and

enrolled him in a school that did not meet his academic needs. The drop in educational rigor and a substandard learning environment contributed much to his decline in learning. Previously Greg had attended a semi-private school and such a transition proved extremely difficult for him. When the move commenced, the writer believed that his wife and son were dealing with the transition. Later, it was discovered that neither of them were making a healthy transition.

During the family's stay in Huntsville, Alabama, Dorris worked to take care of the needs of the family and financially support me while in College. The writer worked two jobs, one as a school bus driver, and the other at the gymnasium on campus. Although the writer worked two jobs while attending college, he believes his wife was not satisfied with their financial arrangements. This was extremely hard for both of them and often caused verbal confrontation. However, God enabled them to endure those four years because of their commitment to one another and their dependence on God. It was during these dark days that the writer's daughter, Twyla, was born, bringing special brightness and joy to their family. This is one example of what God has done for the writer's family. God has always revealed God's love to them when they needed it the most.

In spite of the difficulties during the writer's matriculation at Oakwood College, he obtained valuable experience that prepared him for future challenges associated with life and ministry. He served in many leadership positions, and was admired by his peers well as the college faculty. It was at this time that the Lord began to use the writer in ministry. He was privileged to preach in many churches around the college community, and the South Central Conference. This enabled him to meet different individuals

associated with the Gospel Ministry and the administration of the Conference. The Lord impressed President Charles Dudley, one of these contacts to extend the offer to the writer to serve as a pastor in the South Central Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Following graduation in 1979 from Oakwood College with a Bachelors Degree in Theology, and a Minor in History and Biblical Language, the writer entered graduate school at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. It was at Andrews that the Lord blessed the writer to make a number of valuable contacts. These contacts provided the writer opportunities to travel throughout the country preaching and conducting workshops associated with ministry. The workshops and preaching assignments allowed the writer the opportunity to improve their financial condition. The Lord really blessed their family to grow spiritually and financially while in graduate school.

After graduating from Andrews University with a Masters of Divinity Degree in 1981, the writer was assigned by the South Central Conference to the pastorate of three churches in the Greenville, Mississippi District, which were located in the cities of Greenville, Hollandale, and Rolling Fork. Dorris and the writer had never lived in the state of Mississippi, and it was difficult for them to adjust to the mentality of the populace in that area. However, they were able to make the necessary adjustments as the writer's ministry began to develop. Firstly, he was accustomed to a higher standard of living than many of his members. Secondly, he had to adjust to new cultural realities. These initial challenges allowed God to use the writer in extraordinary ways allowing him to overcome barriers and resistance in order to meet their spiritual needs. The writer was blessed to serve the Greenville District for three years.

After serving the Greenville District, the writer was transferred to the Berean Seventh-day Church in Jackson, Mississippi. This church had a rich history and the largest membership in the state, comprised predominantly of senior citizens. The Berean Congregation required more pastoral attention than any of his previous congregations. This church seemed to view everything from an economic perspective, and did not consider the spiritual impact of their decisions.

Berean was at the cross roads as it related to Seventh-day Adventist Christian Education. It needed a new facility to house their educational institution, since it was located in the church fellowship hall when the writer arrived. This was somewhat challenging because, although the congregation could financially afford a separate building, they had no desire to acquire such debt. It was his responsibility to motivate them to purchase a separate educational facility. After much prayer, fasting, and deliberation, God lead the congregation to secure a structure that would house six grades and with room for expansion.

It was at Berean that the writer faced one of the most difficult spiritual situations of his young ministry. There were four young adults that had become accustomed to influencing the congregation because of their educational attainments. These individuals often manipulated the members to follow them with no regard for the negative impact on the congregation spiritually, economically, or emotionally. The writer had to continue to direct their congregation spiritually, while at the same time deal with the influence these individuals were having on the church family. This was very stressful, and often very depressing, because the writer had not learned to deal well with conflict resolution. This remains challenging in ministry for the writer even at this time. It took over a year and a

half to resolve that particular issue. It was following this incidence that the church began to grow numerically and it appeared that it became more dependent on the promises of God.

It was in Jackson, Mississippi that the writer began to realize the necessity of becoming more financially responsible for his family and less dependent on the South Central Conference to meet their financial needs. This awaking resulted from discovering that after living in a parsonage for seven years, and paying considerably more than the loan note on the parsonage my family had not benefited financially at all. Yet when the writer asked for assistance to help with reassignment they were unwilling to make any concessions. As a result of our financial hardship, the writer's family experienced a lot of stresses relative to securing housing and other things associated with relocating to new pastoral assignments.

Following his years of service in the Berean Church in Jackson, Mississippi, the writer was relocated to the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama. The Lord moved on the family's behalf enabling them to purchase a house and find gainful employment for Dorris.

The New Life Congregation had been traumatized and splintered by previous leadership. This caused many of its members to leave New Life and establish another congregation in the city. The remaining membership consisted of about two hundred and fifty. According to some they were spiritually bankrupt, but anticipating spiritual transformation. This was an awesome responsibility, but God smiled on my leadership, and this challenge became one of the most rewarding of the writer's pastoral ministry.

For two years the Lord blessed the church by almost add to the church daily, and we grew from two hundred and fifty to more than seven hundred in attendance each Sabbath. The writer believes this was the result of the Lord blessing his efforts and the efforts of the New Life Congregation as a unified team. The writer was definitely ready for a change of responsibility, and the congregation was receptive to change. All were excited about the possibility of doing ministry in the local community. The two years that the writer was privileged to serve this congregation was the most stress free, enjoyable and rewarding of his entire ministerial life.

After two years at the New Life Church the writer was asked to serve as pastor of the Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. This was one of the largest congregations in the South central Conference, complete with a church school, and a day care center. This church's reputation was one of being a difficult congregation, but this was magnified because of the negative relationship that some of its members had experienced with the writer's supervisor, and the support he afforded him. The congregation did not accept our friendship and that negatively affected the writer's ability to lead in this setting. Whether this was fact or fiction it was perceived by the writer to be a reality.

It was with trepidation, and concern that the writer entered the Ephesus congregation because of its reception. On his initial Sabbath, as their new pastor, two buses were chartered by some of the members so they could attend the installation of their former pastor in Orlando, Florida. As the writer reflects on the situation, he is convinced that this was to send a message that he was not really welcomed. The family was hurt and did not believe they would ever overcome that incidence.

The financial discomfort of relocating within the denomination was difficult due to a number of inequitable circumstances. The timing selling one home and finding another without assistance from the Conference Office posed tremendous duress. The writer had to incur additional cost of rent and storage until one home was sold and a new home acquired.

Then was the challenge of finding an adequate Seventh-day Adventist school in the new area for the writer's daughter. Ultimately, the writer had to send his daughter to a school out of the area to complete her high school curriculum. However, these were only the beginning of the difficulties experienced during our eight and a half years at Ephesus. While pastoring this congregation the writer was forced to focus on his own spirituality due to the stress and strains associated with this congregation. There were eight or ten individuals that were extremely influential in the Ephesus Congregation and were anti-leadership. Often the writer was confronted by these individuals and a few of their followers about insignificant issues that were of no value to the congregation's spiritual growth.

As the writer revisits these situations involving this particular group of individuals, he concluded that they were more interested in the financial aspects of the congregation than on the growth and development of the church spiritually. The spiritual and numerical growth of the church should have been their top priority.

Although the writer's ministry was saturated with conflict at Ephesus, the Lord still blessed the congregation to be able to increase in membership, and to erect a senior citizen's complex, as a result of a two and a half million-dollar HUD Federal Grant. They were also blessed to liquidate the mortgage of the church school. These accomplishments

reaffirmed the writer's confidence in the ability of God to bring blessings out of situations that appear humanly impossible.

Following the writer's pastorate at the Ephesus Church in Birmingham, he was asked to serve the Longview Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church in Memphis, Tennessee; a congregation that welcomed the writer and his family with open arms. It was definitely a breath of fresh air. Financially, this move was less of a challenge than the previous one. There were hardly any crises situations compared to the previous relocating assignments. This was due to one of the members allowing the writer and his family to stay in their home for six months without compensating them financially, and when they were able to sell their property in Birmingham, it provided them adequate finances to secure another place in Memphis immediately. Although this particular move was relatively smooth, Dorris could not find immediate employment and the compensation from the church was not adequate to allow the writer's family to maintain their previous standard of living.

Longview comprised of a mixture of youth, young adults (baby boomers), and senior citizens; all woven into the faith fabric of the congregation with a wonderful family atmosphere. This made the members dependent not only on the Lord but on each other. They became one of the more caring and giving churches that the writer had pastored. This made an impact on his life and helped him to become a more caring and giving individual.

The challenge with this congregation was in the area of community ministry. They had become accustomed to not reaching out to the local community, which they had been a component of for over forty years. Under the writer's leadership, the church made

valuable changes in this area which was evident in their mission statement that reads, *Serving the Lord with joy, where everybody is somebody and God is Supreme*. The writer was excited about the growth of the Longview Heights Congregation, and anticipated pastoring this particular congregation. After four and a half years he was able to testify that he grew spiritually with them and observed their commitment to ministry in the community.

CONTEXT

For almost twenty-seven years the writer has served as a senior pastor of the congregations referenced earlier in the South Central Conference, which are in the states of Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and the northern part of Florida. This conference is one of nine Regional Conferences in the North America Division, which is part of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At the time of this project the writer was pastoring the Longview Heights Seventh-day Church located in Memphis, Tennessee.

South Central Conference is committed to the spiritual and financial well being of its clergy and their spouse. Yet, they emphasize and support the parent organization's financial philosophy governing its workers, which professes that those who preach the Gospel must realize there will be sacrifices on the part of clergy and their spouses.

When one views the history of this conference they will conclude that it has adhered to the church's philosophy regarding its Workers Compensation, which the writer maintains is antiquated, to say the least. There is no written history available in the area of the compensation package or moving allowance. Hence, the information

referenced in this project has been obtained through oral communication with many retired administrators of this conference.

The matter of the salary package, and moving allowance and its influence on clergy/spouse of the South central Conference is not new to clergy, spouse or to the current administration. The inequity that continues to manifest itself is how decision makers (South central administrators) support the status quo of the parent organization's philosophy that states, "...a spirit of sacrifice and dedication should mark all denominational employees irrespective of the position they hold or the department or services they represent. The work of the Church, including denominational organizations, is a mission, to which lives are dedicated in selfless service."¹ It is this that causes this conference to remain indifferent to the grave financial needs of its clergy, and has tremendously affected the entire ministry of the conference, as well as, the spiritual growth of its clergy.

¹ Office of the North American Division Treasurer, Remuneration Scales 2003, 1.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL

This chapter presents the ministry model for addressing this project's focus on the crises of the remuneration package, the diversity of the pastoral group, the problem statement, and the need for a paradigm shift. A brief overview of the crises, pastoral care, the intervention, and the evaluation is given. The chapter concludes looking at the explanation for using pre and post questionnaires; looking at the current issues and the expectations of this project as they relate to the compensation package and the moving allowance in the South Central Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination.

MINISTRY MODEL

The experiences of the writer's spiritual journey have driven him to focus in the area of crises born out of the compensation (remuneration) package and the moving allowance of the South Central Conference, and their influence on clergy and their spouses.

For almost twenty-seven years, the writer has pastored in the South Central Conference and presently pastor the Longview Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church located in Memphis, Tennessee.¹ Longview Heights is one of 140 churches in the conference. South Central Conference, which comprises the states of Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and the northern tip of Florida and has a membership

¹The writer is presently pastoring in the Southwest Regional Conference in Houston, TX.

of 31,000, is one of nine regional conferences in North America that is part of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination (parent organization). The members of the South Central Conference contribute approximately fourteen million dollars in tithes annually to assist in the operation of South Central Conference. It is from a small portion of these funds that the compensation package and moving allowance for its clergy is generated. The conference does not obtain any additional funding for the support of the clergy and their families from any other source outside of the tithes that its members return. However, the parent organization along with the South Central Conference considers these fund enough for clothing, housing, food, automobile allowance and depreciation, and any other expenses incurred by its clergy.

South Central Conference, which is one of the fastest growing conferences numerically in the North America Division of the denomination, is committed to the well being of its clergy, and seeks to provide for them spiritually, as well as financially. Yet, like many other conferences in the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination, South Central supports the parent organization's financial philosophy that governs its workers. This organization professes that those who preach the Gospel must realize there will be sacrifices even in the area of compensation for clergy.

When the history of this conference is viewed, observers will note that it adheres to the parent organization's philosophy regarding its remuneration compensation package, and moving allowance that states, "...a spirit of sacrifice and dedication should mark all denominational employees irrespective of the position they hold or the department or services they represent. The work of the Church, including denominational

organizations, is a mission to which lives are dedicated in selfless services.”² The writer maintains this philosophy is antiquated, to say the least; hence, there are inadequacies and inequities born out of it that will be addressed later. There is no written history available in the area of the compensation package or moving allowance consequently, any information associated with these elements of South Central Conference have been obtained through oral communication with the oldest retired administrator of South Central, former president C. E. Dudley.

From the humble beginnings of the South Central Conference, the spirit of sacrifice was prevalent and manifested itself in the compensation package of South Central. In the mid 1940’s, the salary was ninety-seven dollars per month and there was neither moneys allocated to the clergy for travel nor any moving allowance according to Elder C.E. Dudley. During the 1940’s, taxes were withheld by the conference and initially the conference administration also withheld one tenth of the clergy’s salary for tithes. One month out of the year, one week’s salary was also withheld for what was called *a week of sacrifice offering*, which occurred during the annual Week of Prayer held throughout the entire conference.

In the early 1960’s the salary went to \$125 per month, in addition to what was called, *the travel budget*. This was additional money that was included in the salary to assist with the expense of transportation by the clergy. Travel budgets were based on the membership size of the clergy’s congregation. In times of financial shortfall in the conference, none of the conference’s clergy would receive compensation for their monthly labors. This was considered to be part of the occupational hazards of being

² Office of the North American Division Treasurer, Remuneration Scales, 1, 2003.

called to the Gospel Ministry. The clergy and spouse would accept this at least externally and would depend on God to provide whatever their needs may have been.

There is no information pertaining to the salaries of the clergy in the 1970's but in the 1980's the salary package was \$1,740 plus \$240 for their travel each month. By 1990 the compensation package escalated to \$2,400 and \$300 for travel per month and all medical expenses were provided by the conference. In the year 2,000 the salary rose to \$3,230 and \$335 for travel per month. It was also at this time that the conference required the clergy to contribute twenty-five percent of their medical expenses, which could total as much as \$2,500 per year. All the expenses over the \$2,500 would be paid by the conference. When the expenses reached this amount, Adventist Risk Management, the South Central Conference's insurance company would be responsible for the remainder regardless of the amount. As of 2004 the clergy salary was \$3,576, plus \$550 for travel per month. If there was any additional travel required by the conference this was financially supported by the conference administration. All of these statistics were applicable for ordained clergy, since this project addresses only ordained clergy and their spouse.

In light of South Central Conference being responsible for its clergy staff of sixty pastors, the conference must address the continuing dilemmas (mentioned later) that finances are having on its clergy and their families. The conference has attempted to demonstrate some sensitivity in the arena of finances by providing financial incentives for its clergy. These incentives include bonuses for the following programs:

1. For reaching the annual goal of subscriptions for the Message Magazine (a denominational magazine), in the amount of five hundred and fifty dollars.
2. For reaching the annual Fall Drive (a fundraiser for each congregation that reaches the Conference's overall programs), in the amounts of \$750-1,000.
3. For having a congregational tithe increase over the previous year's tithe, with the pastor receiving an incentive of three percent of the congregation's tithe increase for that particular year.

Each goal is established by the conference administration based on the size of the congregation's membership. However, these incentives will only benefit those who have success in the above areas, which means the incentives have no impact on the overall compensation package or the moving allowance for all clergy and their families.

Although the administrators are providing some incentives which benefit the pastors of larger congregations, more than those of smaller congregations, they are indirectly adding to the situation because the administration makes the decisions of where each member of the clergy staff serves as a pastor, and the effects of the subtle inadequacies of the moving allowance and remuneration package have on the clergy/spouse of the conference are still not being addressed.

The aforementioned problem reminds me of an incident recorded in the New Testament where Jesus shares a parable comparing the Kingdom of God to a man that went forth to sow (good seed), and an enemy came while he slept and sowed tares among the seed. When the seeds germinated there appeared tares among the crop. Jesus' disciples questioned, "How did this happen"? Jesus responded, "An enemy hath done this".³ There appears to be an enemy in the South Central Conference/parent organization that has sown an invisible (unspoken) agitation between the conference administration

³Mt 13: 24-30.

and clergy. This agitation is associated with the inadequacies of the compensation package, moving allowance, and the ongoing crises that has become prevalent and has not been, and is not presently being addressed. The writer maintains that it has not been addressed primarily because no one in the conference or the parent organization has come forth to acknowledge its existence.

Many of the clergy have recently been dialoguing in private settings about the crises associated with added expenditures resulting from being relocated that have affected normal living expenses. These added living expenditures include:

- Higher gasoline prices when moving from rural to metropolitan areas
- Increased cost of Day Care Centers in metropolitan areas
- Loss of employment for the spouse
- Lose of tenure on jobs for the spouse which produce the loss of income
- Children having to transfer to other educational institutions
- Loss of IRA's and other retirement benefits that are not transferable by the spouse
- Securing adequate and affordable housing

Many clergy and spouses maintain that the insensitivity of the conference administrators along with the expectations of both the administrators and the congregational memberships seem to have magnified the financial challenges of their households. It is proposed that the clergy and their spouses who are or have previously experienced crises because of these issues may be unaware of their crises situation. Hence, it needs to be addressed by the conference.

Group Diversity

The contextual diversity of the group composition is an asset for this project. Since the pastors serve in different metropolitan cities and rural areas of the conference, the varied locations are an advantage when considering the impact various crises have had resulting from the compensation package and the moving allowance on both pastor and spouse.

Purpose Statement

To perform a qualitative study of a specific group of clergy serving in the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist and their spouses who are experiencing and have experienced crises resulting from the compensation package and/or moving allowance, which does not adequately address their financial needs. We hope to show that many clergy families experience financial hardships in the areas of moving, adequate affordable housing, and educational institutions when school age children are involved, among other things that will be revealed later in this document.

Foundations for a Solution to the Problem

In order for the South Central Conference to maximize its compensation package and moving allowance for the benefit of its clergy, the conference must be relevant to the economic times in which we are living. This relevancy will come to light when the conference administrators and the parent organization consider the monetary needs of its clergy and their families. The administrators need to identify with their clergy when it comes to relocating them to new pastoral responsibility, the economic conditions in

which clergy serve, and the overall financial condition of its clergy. It is also time for the conference and the parent organization to look extensively at their compensation package and moving allowances as they compare with clergy of other denominations.

Paradigm Shift

For the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to address the financial crises that arises for its clergy and their families, there is a need for a paradigm shift from the traditional conference operations. Many writers address this shift process. Thomas S. Kuhn, for example, defines paradigm as “an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, shared by members of a given community⁴.”

Some of these resulting changes would be:

- Establish an evaluation document for the clergy
- Establish equitable salary increases based on the results of each pastor’s evaluation
- Establish a moving allowance based on the economics of the city one is relocating too, in comparison of the city from which one is moving
- Connect the practices relating to clergy compensation to the parent body’s expressed biblical and theological groundings, for example its definition of *sacrifice* theologically and in contemporary economic formulations

Crises

The clinical term for any change that overwhelms our ability to handle effectively, or to cope, is trauma. The writer will use the simpler word *crisis*, and it can be caused by a single dramatic event or by a series of minor assaults accumulated over a

⁴ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 175.

long period of time. As a matter of fact, crises can arise from anything that challenges the reality of our beliefs and confronts us with the possibility that we will give up those beliefs and can cause us to feel betrayed. All losses create a sense of betrayal, because when loss or other upheavals rupture our beliefs, we no longer exist in the same way. Thomas Kuhn states that, “A crisis can injure us deeply, profoundly altering the way we feel about ourselves, others, organizations and seriously undermining our capacity to act effectively.”⁴ Nevertheless, a crisis can provide its victims with a grand possibility of new beginnings. Crises must be addressed because no one can avoid them by not deciding to address them; for choosing not to decide is a decision.

The challenge of beginning to address crises is that many tend to keep their crises to themselves for various reasons. Some do so because of shame, others because of not having anyone to identify with what they could be experiencing, some so they can ignore dealing with the crises.

Pastoral Care

The care practice that will be emphasized is founded on the fact that humans are constantly learning, which is a complex process. Most know from experience that humans learn everything from very basic skills, like tying shoelaces and riding bicycles, to complex emotional responses, like love, jealousy, and nervousness. Each of us has a tremendous capacity for learning, and learning in groups provides a better environment for addressing crises situations because of the corporate setting and input. Peggy Way seems to support this concept when she writes,

⁵Ibid., 178.

Within the discipline of pastoral care, family systems practitioners note the potential for positive change through a family crisis, especially when participants in the system can be teased or eased into dialogue, when one member can make changes that affects the whole, or where there is a leadership style of non-anxious presence that can help to free the system to be responsible in caring better for itself.⁵

Everyone becomes a healer in this process of healing. Each group member is actually being cared for in the midst of verbally communicating and radically listening about one another's crisis situations. According to Laura Day, "awareness and connectedness are the elements that activate the alchemy of change."⁶ In the end, pastoral care should positively affect the attitudes, feelings, interests, goals, self-esteem and any related behaviors. It is the responsibility of the caregiver to partner with the participants to assist the participants in improving life and to change the uncomfortable symptoms they may be experiencing.

Adventist clergy and spouses have not had a forum to address their compensation nor the moving allowance concerns and to define how these have caused crises in their family life and ministry.

Intervention

Behaviorists frequently teach clients to follow a systematic, logical, and effective approach to solving problems, and the writer will do the same using the following steps:

⁶Peggy Way, *Created by God: Pastoral Care for All God's People*, (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press), 49.

⁷ Laura Day, *Welcome to Your Crisis: How to Use the Power of Crisis to Create the Life You Want*. Little, (New York, NY: Brown and Company), 206.

- Define the problem
- Identify the goal
- Generate options
- Choose the best solution
- Evaluate the outcome

The intervention for this project is founded on Colson's definition that, "Crisis intervention is a process used to interrupt and/or positively impact a person's immediate crisis reaction. Sometimes called, emotional first aid, crisis intervention involves the use of verbal and nonverbal communication to encourage, empower, and build confidence in those who experience a crisis."⁵

The ultimate goal of the intervention was:

1. To provide relief of the participant's internal pain
2. To provide three sessions to address concerns that manifest themselves resulting from the crises
3. To provide assistance for participants to regain old coping skills and/or develop new coping skills
4. To provide assistance for the participants to verbally express their emotions

The intervention will take place in five cities (Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee; Birmingham and Huntsville, Alabama; and Jackson, Mississippi) of the South Central Conference. The pastor care-giving process will be a compilation of one session held on three successive days in each of the four cities. The duration for the intervention process will be approximately six weeks.

⁸Charles Colson, *Helping a Neighbor in Crisis* (Wheaton, IL: Tydale House Publishing Inc., 1997), 9.

The foundation for the intervention that was implemented came from David G. Benner's, *Three Stages and Tasks of Strategic Pastoral Counseling*. These were described as *encounter, engagement, and disengagement*.⁶ Although they are different from the more common description of care and counseling stages, which are associated with task oriented terms such as goal structure problem solving, and intervention, these provided the guidance for addressing crises in this project.

EVALUATION

The evaluation component of this project was determined by the response of a post questionnaire approximately one week following the last session or during the last session of each group. This questionnaire was distributed by hand, email or mail, and should have been returned immediately. It consisted of the some questions contained in the pre-survey questionnaire with some additional ones from my research.

Part of the evaluation was in essay form and was designed to provide additional information on how the sessions were helpful to the participants in identifying particular crises and the impact of the intervention. The essay also allowed them to express how they benefited from the sessions outside of what the questionnaire may have revealed. In addition, it provided valuable feedback as to how the intervention for this project could become more effective in the future.

Pre and Post Questionnaires

A post questionnaire was used as a tool to further assist the participants by providing them the results of the intervention, as it was compared with the pre

⁶Benner, David G., *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*: Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI. 1998, p. 63.

questionnaire, which became a means of measuring the effectiveness of the intervention. This eliminated relying on informal or unstructured ways of analyzing the impact of the intervention on the participants. Dr. Scott T. Meier supports the use of such instruments as questionnaires for feedback in pastoral care (counseling) and psychotherapy when he used an example of its impact in one of his classes. Dr. Meier shared an example of the effectiveness of using what he called the *Outcome Questionnaire* when he referenced the following example:

Lambert and his colleagues have recently demonstrated the positive effects of feedback with clients who are failing to make progress in therapy. Using the Outcome Questionnaire (OQ) with university counseling center clients, they examined the effect of providing feedback to therapists with clients both making and not making progress in therapy (based on OQ scores). Graphs and progress markers (colored dots that indicated whether the client was functioning in the normal range of OQ scores) were given to therapists to indicate which clients had an adequate rate of change, an inadequate rate of change, or failure to make any progress. Lambert and his colleagues found that OQ scores at termination were higher for clients who were initially not making progress but whose therapist was receiving feedback, compared to clients who were not making progress, and whose therapist received no feedback. In fact, clients who were not progressing and whose therapist received no feedback worsened over time.¹⁷

CURRENT ISSUES

Some of the current issues of the South Central Conference associated with the compensation package and moving allowance are:

¹⁰This was taken from a discussion of using questionnaire feedback by Dr. Scott T. Meier who is professor and co director of training of the program in counseling/school psychology in the Department of Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology, at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

- Should the clergy and their families be expected to sacrifice in all walks of life for the sake of the gospel ministry in the South Central Conference?
- How does the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists compensation package and moving allowance compare with other denominations whose clergy are pastoring comparably sized congregations and have similar years of experience in pastoral ministry?
- In terms of Adventists' practices of Biblical interpretation is it biblical for clergy who are pastoring congregations of 500 or more in metropolitan cities to be the recipients of the same salary compensation as those pastoring smaller congregations?
- Are there any policies needing to be changed, and how do the clergy and spouse get involved in promoting such changes?
- Should the clergy of South Central Conference, be allowed to supplement their income by securing additional employment and should that employment be considered a conflict of interest?
- According to the present policy of this conference, its clergy cannot supplement their income through outside employment, yet the present remuneration package is not sufficient to meet the broad financial demands of its clergy.
- With the expectations of the congregations of the South Central Conference, and the expectations of administration, how can its clergy succeed in ministry with the present compensation package and moving allowance that produce many crises associated with finances?

EXPECTATIONS FROM THIS PROJECT

It is anticipated that this project will enable the writer to accomplish the following:

- A.** Enable the writer to improve my skills in listening and spiritual diagnosis in the area of pastoral care.
- B.** Enable the writer to become a more effective caregiver through radical listening.
- C.** Improve skills in listening and spiritual diagnosis in the area of pastoral care and counseling.

- D.** Enable the writer to assist in equipping other pastors and their spouses to be more aware of assisting other clergy/spouses experiencing crises in the area of this project. One such crisis is that of securing adequate housing in the newly assigned location.
- E.** It is hoped the findings will be a stimuli for the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church to review and make the necessary adjustments to the compensation package and moving allowance to meet the needs of their staff.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This chapter provides a thorough background of the foundations that support the model and hypothesis of the work. We first begin with an understanding of tithing, which is where the funds for the compensation package and moving allowance are taken. The concept of tithing is presented on three fronts. First, it is necessary to address the relationship between tithing and stewardship because the former is part and parcel of the latter and they cannot be divorced. Secondly, the writer will trace the biblical evidence of tithing in order to see how the issue developed over time. The schema is to examine the data in the Old Testament and then the New Testament. Thirdly, the writer will outline the theological tenets learned from the biblical overview. Here the writer set out the points that are useful to Christians living in the twenty-first century who is confronted by the demands of the biblical text. The writer will also conclude with some of the theological issues that exist, and an overview of the concept of tithing as it affects God's people.

The Principle of Stewardship

The theology and practice of tithing according to Judeo-Christian principles are established within the general and overarching context of stewardship. Basic to this factor is the understanding that God owns everything and that people are only managers. The Bible teaches this clearly. The psalmist declares decidedly and poetically, "the earth is

the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein" (24:1). Hence, B=God claims universal sovereignty over all creation, things animate and inanimate.

William D. Watley is correct,

The difficult truth we must accept if we are to have a right understanding of who and what we are, a proper attitude to all that we possess. And a correct approach to giving is this: God is the owner of everything, and we are the owners of nothing.¹

But God has chosen to share God's possessions with mortals. God has appointed us as wise and faithful managers, supervisors and administrators over a designated portion of God's creation. We must recognize that God owns everything and that we are privileged to use God's possessions. As such, therefore, we endeavor to use God's materials in a way that is both pleasing and faithful to God.

Definition of Stewardship

Genesis indicates that Joseph was placed in a position of ruler-ship or governorship of Pharaoh's possessions. He was placed *in charge* of the king's palace (41:40) and indeed, *in charge of the whole land of Egypt* (vs. 41).² We may note, therefore, that a steward is one entrusted with the management of the household or estate of another. By implication, it is characterized by qualities such as responsibility,

¹William D. Watley, *Bring the Full Tithe: Sermons of the Grace of Giving* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1995), 24.

²Joseph had a steward (Gen.44:1) who was the one in charge of his house. For an excellent study of the life of Joseph, see Carlyle B. Haynes, *God Sent a Man* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1962, 1990).

accountability, and faithfulness or trust. This is precisely Jesus' intonation in the parable of the wise and faithful steward (Luke 12:42-48).³

But in a wider context, stewardship must be defined within the sense of *allness*, that is, inasmuch as all things belong to God, so too must we serve God with all that we have. In Luke 10:27, Jesus summarizes this duty of the Christian to the Master: "you shall love the Lord your God with all our heart and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Hence, Christian stewardship entails our "responsibility for, and use of, everything entrusted to us by God—life, physical being, time, talents, and abilities, material possessions, opportunities to be of service to others, and the knowledge of truth."⁴ In a larger dimension, it "involves the wise and unselfish use of life."⁵ This is clearly the intention of the Greek word *oikonomia*, translated as *stewardship* in the New Testament (Luke 16: 2-4, 8; Titus 1:7). Indeed, "The original meaning of the word economics or *oikonomas* referred to more than money; it referred to the whole ordering, administration, or management of life."⁶

Stewardship and Tithing

The principle of tithing is to be understood within the bounds of stewardship of material possessions in general, and money in particular. It must be noted that when

³For an amplification of this parable see the series featuring I. J. DuPlessis, *Reading Luke 12:35-48 as Part of a Travel Narrative*, *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988): p. 217-34; W. Sebothoma, "Luke 12:35-48: A Reading of Black South African," *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988): p. 325-35; E.H. Scheffler, "A Psychological Reading of Luke 12:35-48," *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988): p. 355-71; and J. Rousseau, "Reading Luke 12:35-48: An Empirical Study," *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988); p. 391-413.

⁴S. D. A. *Encyclopedia* (Review and Herald Publishing Association) Washington, D.C., rev. ed., 1425.

⁵Paul G. Smith, *Managing God's Goods* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1973), 21.

⁶Watley, *Bring The Full Tithe*, 27.

stewardship was instituted by God, it was not in terms of monetary units as we understand them today. The Old Testament references to tithing (Gen14:20; 28:22) do not necessarily indicate the use of money. However, money as medium of exchange became a necessity when time, distance and convenience became important factors. Money took whatever form people found acceptable for the payment of their time and service. Hence, in modern terms money serves a valuable purpose for day-to-day commerce as well as the sacred institution of tithing.

We must emphasize that stewardship and money are not synonymous. Stewardship relates to our management of the resources God has put within our care within the context of our relationship with Him. One of the things that we are obliged to manage is the money that God has placed in our care as part of these material possessions. This acts as a constant reminder that God is the One who provides us with the power and ability to earn wealth or make a living (Deut. 8:18). Hence, to remind us that God is the source of all blessings (James 1:17) and indeed all things (Ps. 50:12) He instituted the system of tithing.

The Biblical Data: Old Testament

We will now turn our attention to a systematic study of the biblical references to tithing as they appear in chronological order. Of necessity we begin with the patriarchs.

Abram

The earliest biblical references to the tithe or tenth part (Heb. *ma asar* or *ma asrah*; Grk. *Dekatoo* or *apodekatoo*) are found in the patriarchal record. Gen. 14 narrates Abram's successful recapture of his nephew Lot and goods from five raiding Canaanite

kings. Upon his triumphal return Abram was met by the Priest/King Melchizedek of Salem and “he (Abram) gave him tithes of all” (14:20 KJV). The NIV and NLT rightly interpret this in saying that Abram gave *a tenth* of everything, that is, all the goods he had recovered. What is striking here is that this quite a casual reference to tithing. By acknowledging Melchizedek’s divine priesthood, it is indicative of the fact that Abram “was well acquainted with this sacred institution.”⁷

Furthermore, the claim has been made that references to tithing have been “found in other religions and cultures than those of Israel or the Semitic peoples alone.”⁸ It stands to reason, therefore, that tithing was a well understood and practice matter in the early history of the ancient Near East. However, “none of the other tithing systems were as defined or as specific as Israel’s.”⁹

Several poignant points may be made from this first example of tithing. These are still relevant to Christians living in the 21st century.

- This tithing occurred at a very early stage in the development in of Abram’s faith. Indeed, he had not yet acceded to the status of “believing God and this being credited to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6); his name had not yet been changed to Abraham (17:5); and he had not had the battle of faith in the command to sacrifice his son (Gen.22). In short, this example of tithing is one of the earliest experiences of the patriarch’s developing faith relationship with God.
- Abram/Abraham is commonly called “the father of faith” but as the first person to practice tithing in the Bible, he is

⁷Seventh-day Adventists Believe...A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines (Silver Spring, MD: The Ministerial Association General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1988), 272. (Sites hereafter as SDA Believe).

⁸H. H. Guthrie, Jr., *Tithe, Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. G. A. Buttrick (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962), 4:654.

⁹E. E. Carpenter, *Tithe, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Gen. Ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 4:861.

also to be regarded as the “father of tithing.” Perhaps it was his faith in God that led to the development of his practice of returning a tenth to God. “Thus from the outset tithing and faith are linked together in Scripture. We tithe not because it is written in the law but as an expression of our faith.”¹⁰

- Abraham tithed out of thanksgiving because God had signally blessed him with victory over his ferocious enemies. To put it tersely, “The blessings preceded the tithing.”¹¹ So, even today our faithfulness in tithing is a faith response to what God has already given.
- Abram’s tithing was not a mere following of some ancient practice. Although it has been claimed that it was customary in the ancient world for triumphant warriors to pay a tithe of war booty,¹² the emphasis of the text is that “Abram’s giving of tithes seems to have been theologically motivated: it was recognition that it was God Most High who had given him victory.”¹³

Jacob

Evidently Jacob also understood the practice of tithing. Retreating in abject desperation from home because of his own deceit (Gen. 27-28) he falls wearily asleep. God appeared to him in a dream, commonly called *Jacob’s Ladder* (28:10-15). Awakening from the dream in awe, he named the place Bethel, *House of God* (vv. 16-19). Then he made a pledge to tithe, “If God will be with me...so that I return safely to my father’s house, then the Lord will be my God and ...of all that You give me I will give You a tenth” (vv. 20-22).

¹⁰Watley, *Bring The Full Tithe*, 13.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 14.

¹²Smith, *The Tithe, Biblical Illustrator*, 21.

¹³ Carpenter, *Tithe, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 862.

This passage elicits a classic Hebraic structure that denotes the protasis/apodosis format: If...then. In the first place (the protasis or if clause) Jacob invokes the presence, protection and preservation of God with the resultant blessing (so that) of safe return home (vv. 20-21a), in the second place (the apodosis or then clause) he acknowledges the Lordship or sovereignty of God with the resultant pledge (vv. 21b-22). In short, the pledge to tithe or give God a tenth of all with which he is blessed, comes on the heels of God's provisions. The obvious fact is the tithing is again a response to what God has already done.

Two factors are noteworthy and hold relevance for the people of God today:

1. Jacob's pledge was made at a time when he was wandering, and without large financial resources. In short, he committed himself at a point in time when he was at his weakest financially. The pledge was an action of faith based in the fact that God was present and able to protect, preserve and provide.
2. Jacob's pledge was not forced out of him; it was voluntary. This was not a legal obligation or a coerced response. The fact must be underscored: his was a voluntary act in response to the loving way in which God had declared Himself and in effect, assured him of a future.

The Levitical System

Leviticus

Curiously, tithing forms the conclusive statement in Lev. 27:20-32. It is here that tithing becomes a part of law. In fact, this Priestly Code, dealing with an agrarian and pastoral culture and community, makes a legal demand:

A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the ... The

entire tithe of the herd and flock—every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd’s rod—will be holy to the Lord... (NIV)¹⁴

Factors to be highlighted here are:

The principle of *allness*. This is the idea transmitted in the Hebrew word *qodesh*, translated as *holy*. Further, the book of Leviticus deals with the way in which the elect people of God may approach Him. The key word is *holy*, used over eighty times in the book. Just as the sacrifices were holy, made to a holy God, for a holy purpose, so is the tithe. It too is sacred to God. And the fact that it concludes the book is significant. It is not just the sacrificial system that was important but also the way in which they treated their material possessions.

Numbers

In the midst of Israel’s wilderness wandering God held the people to the sacred obligation of tithing. For the first time, the Priestly Code clearly stipulates how the tithe is to be used. The sacred purpose for which the tithe is to be used is described in 18:20-32. Since the Levites received no tribal allotments, the tithe was to go exclusively to them in exchange for “all their time in fostering Israel’s worship, ministering at the sanctuary, and instructing the people in the law of the ...”¹⁵

Three principles are significant in the description of tithing according to the book of Numbers:

- The function of the tithe was the support of Israel’s religious system. The Levites, as the moral teachings of the people were to be supported with the sacred and holy tithe. This was its exclusive use: “I give to the Levites all the

¹⁴ Interestingly, immediately after this the book ends with, “These are the commands the Lord gave Moses on Mount Sinai for the Israelites.” So Leviticus is part of a legal code.

¹⁵ S.D.A. Believe, p. 272.

tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting” (18: 21; cf. vs. 24 for the same message). Again, “...it is your wages for your work” (vs. 31).

- The Levites themselves were not exempt from tithing. They in turn were to give a tenth of all they received to the priests, the direct descendants of Aaron, Israel’s first high priest. Note the divine injunction, “The Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the Levites and say to them, when you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the Lord’s offering” (18: 25-26).
- God required the best part. Num. 18:28-29 states, “From these tithes you must give the Lord’s portion to Aaron the priest. You must present as the Lord’s portion the best and holiest part of everything given to you”.

Tithing therefore recognized the validity of the role of the priests and

Levites.

Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomic provisions for tithing are based on the fact that the tithe is a sacred vow (*neder*) made to the Lord (12: 6.11.17). The tithe is not result of some haphazard or rash decision; it is certainly not an afterthought. All three verses mention the Hebrew word *neder* (“vow”) that refers specifically to something that is promised. So the tithe is something specific that has been promised with a sacred oath *to the Lord* (vs. 11). On this basis, we may note several important principles:

1. Deliberate action. The tithe was to be specifically set apart as referenced in Deut. 14:22 which reads, “Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.”¹⁶

¹⁶The tithe, constituting of agricultural products, was also to be “used, year by year, in an offering culminating in a sacrificial meal in which the house of the farmer is to share.” Guthrie, Jr., p. 654. In short, it was part of a celebration. This implies joyful festivity for the goodness and blessings of the Lord over the course of the year.

2. The tithe was to be taken to a specific place designated by God for the people to worship Him (12:4-7; 17-18; 14:22-27).
3. Besides the support of the Levites, every three years a special tithe was collected for charitable purposes. It was distributed to “the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own), and the alien, the fatherless and the widows” 14:29; cf. 26:12)—“those without land to produce crops for themselves.”¹⁷
4. Blessing. Faithfulness and obedience to God’s imperative to tithe was juxtaposed with the resultant promise: “so that the Lord your God may bless you in the work of your hands” (14:29b). The same is invoked in 26:15, “Look down from heaven, your dwelling place, and bless your people Israel and the land¹⁸ you have given us as you promised on oath to our forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.”¹⁸

The Prophets

Amos

Called to the prophetic office sometime around 760 BCE this shepherd/prophet brings a stinging message to Israel that denounces the evil lifestyle of people from the northern provinces. Speaking tongue-in-cheek the prophetic declaration exclaims:

Go ahead and offer your sacrifices to the idols at Bethel and Gilgal. Keep on disobeying—your sins are mounting up! Offer sacrifices each morning and bring your tithe every three days (4:4).
NLT

Here God is rebuking his wayward people for the hollowness of their religious life, including tithing. They had no concern for righteousness and justice (cf. 5:7, 10-15, and 21-24). Yet in a rather ritualized and programmatic manner they brought the tithe. To be certain, they loved to tithe in order to brag about it everywhere (4:4-4) but they mired

¹⁷Guthrie, Jr., *Tithe, Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, 654.

¹⁸For an excellent study on the value of land as blessing and promise, see Walter Brueggemann, *The Land, Overtures in Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

in injustice and social indecencies such that God hated their religiosity. They were empty. God wanted justice and righteousness (5:24) but the people brought noisy, unacceptable praise (5:21-23). Hence, their tithes, plenty though they may have been, were rejected. In Amos' day, the tithe came in, but not with joy, love and sincerity as stipulated by the covenant (Deut 14:23-28). It was for purposes of boasting. It was rote legalism. So God denounced it.

Nehemiah

The post-exilic record indicates that the tithe was still a part of Israelite cultus and worship. Nehemiah 10:37-38 points out that the tithe was still used for the support of the Levites who themselves brought "a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God" (vs. 38b). They were not exempt from tithing. This represents a continuation of the injunction given in Numbers. The motif of continuity is seen in that Nehemiah 12:44 and 13:12 pointedly declare that the tithe was brought to a specific place designated by God for the people to worship God. Nehemiah specifically names this as the *House of God* (12:40). And the tithe (agricultural produce) was placed in storerooms.¹⁹

Malachi

The ideas of tithes and storerooms (or storehouse) are linked in Mal. 3:6-12. In this passage, called a divine disputation,²⁰ God remonstrates with the people because of their unfaithfulness to Him, specifically in the areas of tithing. The disputation, arranged or structured on a series of questions and answers begins with God declaring His

¹⁹Neh. 12:44 says, "At that time men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the contributions, first fruits, and tithes..." In 12:12 we read, "All Judah brought the tithes of grain, new wine and oil into the storerooms."

²⁰Douglas Stuart, *Malachi*, in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), 1365.

immutable nature, which kept the people from being destroyed (vs. 6).²¹ He then accuses them of turning away from Him (vs. 7a). This is a tantamount to rebellion and apostasy. Yet He invites them, *Return to me* (vs. 7b). This is a call to repentance because in such contexts the word, *return* (from Heb. shub) means to turn or come back to God.²² The imagery comes from walking where one has been going in the wrong direction, that is, going away from God, and needs to effect a change in direction in order to return to God, that is, walk in the right direction. At point here is agreement or reconciliation with God. Amos 3:3 puts it in perspective, “Can two walk together unless they are in agreement?”

The people inquire, “How are we to return” (repent)? (vs. 7c). The divine response is strange because instead of a direct answer, the response comes in both an interrogative and a declaration: “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me” (vs. 8). The question seems ridiculous. Who will be out of his mind to try and steal from God? But the answer is pointed: the people, those who worship God and follow the religious rituals, are guilty. In short, God is teaching them that they are called to repent because they have robbed or stolen from Him.

But the people remonstrate, “How have we robbed you?” The divine response is terse, “In tithes and in offerings” (8b). The people, religious though they may be, have been rebellious in that they were unfaithful to God in tithing. Hence, the community is placed under interdict or curse (vs. 9).

²¹N. M. Waldmann, “Some Notes on Malachi 3:6; 3:13; Psalm 42:11,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93 (1974): 543-49.

²²Shub is the common term used for repentance and conversion in the prophetic genre (Jer. 3:22; 4:1; 5:3; Exek. 3:17-21; 14:7; 17:21-32; Joel 2:12-14; Zeph. 2:3; 3:5; 5:4). For further study of this, see William L. Holladay, *The Root shub in the Old Testament with Particular Reference to its Usage in Covenantal Contexts* (Leiden: Brill, 1958).

Thus far we note the principle that tithing is based on a call to be honest in one's stewardship or management of the material possessions that God has placed in our care. If there is dishonesty, deemed as robbing God, then repentance is demanded. In other words, tithing is valuable only from a truly repentant heart. All selfishness and anything that gets our attention, and by extension our worship, must be discarded. This is especially the case with greed for "where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). To refuse to repent calls down a divine curse. To avoid such, the people may repent or return to God by restoring to him the tithes and offerings. With this, God says that he will return to them. The idea is that God had turned away and left them since divine rejection was one of the covenant curses (Lev. 26:28; Deut. 31:17; 32:19). So upon their repentance, God will turn in acceptance and blessing. In short, he will reinstitute the covenant.²³

Concomitant to this are two other principles:

1. Live by trust. This is the force of the imperative, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse" (vs. 19a) of God. Note that the entire tithe is required; there is no partial tithe. There is no such thing as partial faithfulness. Indeed, "We're either living by theft or we are living by trust."²⁴
2. Blessing. When in unselfishness the tithe is faithfully returned to God then He pours out blessings such that there is insufficient room to receive them (vv. 10b-12). This shows continuity with the institution of tithing in Deuteronomy. Furthermore, the fact that God calls us to "test" or prove Him (vs. 10b) shows His commitment to keeping His promise. The idea of God testing people is common in the O.T. (Gen. 22:1; Ps. 11:5; 26:2; 55:10;

²³The full text of Mal. 3:7b reads, "Return to me and I will return to you." While the same word "shub" is used in both cases the context is clear that the people are called to repent but God has no reason to repent, that is, change. He is without sin. He says clearly, "I the Lord do not change" (3:6). The sense of the text connotes, "Return (repent) to me and I will turn graciously to you."

²⁴Watley, *Bring The Full Tithe*, 29.

Prov. 17:3) but the idea of a person testing God is very rare. In other words, if He does not “throw open the windows of heaven and pour out so much blessing” (Mal. 3:10c) on His faithful, repentant people, then He is deemed as being unfaithful to His word. He will have failed the test. He will be a liar. But this is impossible because God cannot lie (Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6: 18).

A very important point of comparison is to be made between Amos and Malachi. The first stresses lack of blessing because of presenting the tithe with the wrong motive while the latter stresses lack of blessing because of not bringing the tithe (stealing from God).²⁵

The New Testament Era

The New Testament (NT) contains five definitive references to tithing: Matt 23:23; Luke 11:42; 18:12; 1 Cor. 9:13-14; and Heb. 7:1-10. The first two instances, dealing with the same issue and using almost identical wording, Jesus condemns the hypocrisy of some of the religious leaders. Note Matt. 23:23.

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter without neglecting the former. Cf. Luke 11:42.

The casual way in which Jesus speaks of the tithe indicates His familiarity with, and acceptance of, the practice.²⁶ It must be noted that He does not rebuke or denounce the practice and institution of tithing; rather He rebukes the hypocrisy of those religiously pompous people who pay attention down to the minutest detail of the law—tithing spices

²⁵Carpenter, *Tithe*, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 862.

²⁶In fact, Jewish religious instruction as contained in Mishna Ma'as 1.1 “stipulated that everything used for food, that was cultivated and grew from the earth, was subject to the earth, was subject to the tithe.” Guthrie, Jr., 655.

and garden herbs—but neglect weightier matters like justice, mercy and faithfulness.

Colloquially, it is as though Jesus is saying, “You are majoring in the minors.” As far as Jesus was concerned, both matters are important: “you should have practiced the latter (justice, etc.) without neglecting the former (tithing).” In short, do not enforce the letter of the law while neglecting the spirit of the law.

Furthermore, while Jesus strongly condemned this pharisaical lack of sense of proportion in religious observance, it also shows a sense of continuity with the tithing principle from the Old Testament. The practice had continued from the time of Malachi, the last of the prophets before the coming of John the Baptist—a period spanning some 400 years. Much had occurred during this Intertestamental Period but tithing had not been abrogated. It had become maligned by the time of Christ and He had rebuked it.²⁷

Luke 18:12, the third reference to tithing, is part of a longer periscope (vv. 9-14) where Jesus narrates the familiar story of the Pharisee and the publican. On one hand, in this parable of contrast He denounces the proud, self-important arrogance of the Pharisee who, among other things in boasting of his religiosity, mentions his practice of tithing. On the other hand, Jesus upholds the humble, self-effacing attitude of the publican who can make no such claim but simply plead for mercy. The bad pride of the “I-am-holier-than-thou” Pharisee is condemned while the publican is justified (vs. 14). Jesus did not condemn tithing, only the self-congratulatory spirit of religiosity. Jesus is hereby giving notice that religious practice and pride are not as important as humility of spirit. One may

²⁷In these “woe” or rebuking passages (Matt. 22:13-39; Luke 11:37-54) Jesus harshly criticized the Pharisees because they: (1) washed their hands but not their hearts, (2) remembered to tithe but forgot justice, (3) loved people’s praise, (4) made impossible religious demands, and (5) didn’t accept the truth about others and prevented others from believing it. The wrongly focused on outward appearances and ignored the condition of their hearts. We do the same when our service is motivated by a desire to be seen rather than from a pure heart and love for others. Others may be fooled, but God isn’t. Bring your inner life under God’s control; then your outer life will naturally reflect him. See Student’s Life Application Bible, New Living Translation (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1996), p. 990.

be religious-engaging in all the right church activities, even tithing-but not be spiritual, having a spirit of humility. Indeed, “The central truth of Luke 18: 9-14 is that humility is more pleasing to God than a haughty and perfunctory performance of religious duties.”²⁸

In I Cor. 9:7-14 the apostle Paul makes an implicit reference to tithing. The basic point that he makes in vv. 7-12 is the principle of recuperation as noted in the following select verses:

Who plants a garden and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of its milk (vs.7)?

“Do not muzzle the ox when it is treading out the grain” (cf. Deut. 25: 4). Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing the harvest” (vv. 9b-10).

If we have sown spiritual seed among you is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you (vs. 11a)?

With this in mind it becomes transparent that in vv. 13-14, the concluding section of the periscope, the same principle is highlighted. Although the word *tithe* is not used, the language of tithing is clear. Referring to the OT Levitical practice, Paul declares, “Don’t you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered at the altar? In the same way the Lord has commanded those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel” (vv. 13-14). The principle of continuity is adhered to.

Speaking of this issue, we may agree with the claims of one authority:

After the Crucifixion, when the divinely directed role of the Levitical priesthood ended, we still see tithes used to support the

²⁸Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 32 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984), 334.

ministry of God's Church. Paul illustrated the principle underlying this by drawing a parallel between the Levitical system and the newly established gospel ministry.²⁹

In the final reference to tithing in the N.T. Heb. 7:1-10 illustrates the above and consistent principle of continuity. It harks back to the O.T. narratives of (1) Abram giving tithe to Melchizedek as well as (2) the Levitical practice of returning the tenth part of their increase. This passage concretizes the fact that even to the time of the late first century when the N.T. canon was about to be closed³⁰ the institution of tithing was still in effect. Although questions of authorship abound (Paul, Luke, Barnabas, Apollos, or someone who at least refers to Timothy as a *brother* (13:23), what is clear is that the recipients of the letter needed to be reassured that Christianity was true and that Jesus is the messiah. Therefore, in confirming the claims of Christianity and the authenticity of Jesus as the messiah in the same breath with the affirmation of tithing, the book of Hebrews shows its pertinence and relevance. We may conclude intelligently, "Nowhere does the New Testament repeal or relax this system."³¹

Furthermore, we are instructed by this passage that just as Abraham remitted tithe to Melchizedek, the duly appointed priest of the Most High God, so too N.T. believers are to remit tithe to Jesus Christ, our duly appointed High Priest according to the order of

²⁹S. D. A. Believe, 272.

³⁰The book of Hebrews was probably written around 70 CE to "second generation" Christians (2:3) who were facing fierce persecution from Romans and Jews alike. Since the religious sacrifices and ceremonies are mentioned it appears that the Temple was still standing. Hence, the conclusion that Hebrews may well have been written just prior to 70 CE, historic date for the destruction of the Temple by the Romans

³¹S. D. A. Believe, 273.

Melchizedek (Heb. 5:9, 10; 7:1-22). While the tithe actually goes for the support of the ministry, it is to Jesus that it is faithfully returned, since ministers represent their Lord.³²

Theological Issues

Since tithing generally issued from theological motives³³ several theological injunctions may now be ascertained from the above study of biblical foundations. These include the following:

1. Stewardship. Basic to the institution of tithing is the praxis of stewardship. God owns everything; we own nothing although we possess a few. "Possession, however, and the privileges of use and enjoyment do not constitute ownership."³⁴ The difference between ownership and possession is seen in that we cannot take anything that we possess to the grave when we die because we do not own them. This is a difficult concept for people in the commercially driven age in which we live. But the witness and wisdom of an old Indian story illustrates the point. He said, "The land was here-the man came-he claimed to won it, but he died and the land is still here. How could he claim to won it when he could not take it with him?" It is true that, "From a Biblical perspective possession is not ownership. Our attitude toward tithing indicates whether we acknowledge that we are only managers or whether we pretend to be owners."³⁵

2. Divine sovereignty. This is corollary to the first point in that it underscores the fact that a Creator God holds ownership and ultimate authority over everyone and everything, including money. Hence, as far back as the patriarchs and ancient Israel, the tithing principle was designed, not to raise money, but as a protection for each individual to keep from forgetting God's ownership. This has always been a critical area, for people tend to consider themselves as owners; owners of the things they produce, or possess, or

³²C. G. Tuland, "Tithing in the New Testament," *Ministry*, (October 1961), 12.

³³Carpenter, *Tithe, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 861.

³⁴Watley, *Bring The Full Tithe*, 25.

³⁵S. D. A. Believe, 276, n. 10.

accumulate. This is a dangerous assumption because man can never be an owner.³⁶

3.Faithfulness. Since Abraham is the father or model of all believers, his example is worthy of imitation by believers today. God ordained the institution of tithing to keep the steward/Owner relationship open and well defined. The factor that keeps this running is our faithfulness, because God is always faithful (Ps. 119:137, 152; 143:13). Mel Rees is correct, “While the relationship between a man and God remains constant, his material possessions will vary according to his ability and the size of trust with which he has been entrusted (see Matthew 25:14-26). “The only requirement is faithfulness.”³⁷ In fact, Jesus endorsed the spirit of the law-faithfulness-in our Christian experience (Matt. 6:33). And Paul is clear, “Now it is required that those who have been given a sacred trust must prove faithful” (I Cor. 4:2).

4.Nature of the tithe. Scripture describes the tithe as holy and sacred (Lev. 27:-32). It is not to be treated flippantly or remitted carelessly or only after all our bills have been paid. Holy things are to be handled in a holy manner. God must be put first (Matt.6:33). In commenting on this factor of the holy nature of the tithe (Lev. 27:30-33), Carpenter says convincingly, “This passage gives a theological basis for bringing the produces one owns, and distribute the wealth of the land (cf. Duet. 8:17f.).”³⁸

5.Function or use of the tithe. The Bible teaches that the tithe is for the purpose of supporting those who are called to the ministry. Since ministers are paid from a sacred coffer they must ensure honest work, Ministers must be very sensitive as to the holy and sacred nature of the tithe such that lethargy and mediocrity must be rejected and despised. Even here, however, we must understand that the primary function of the sacred tithe is not merely a means of supporting ministers or church work. If this were the case, then tithe may be considered as a tax, and God a tax collector. The truth of the matter is that the tithing principle was ordained before there was any gospel ministry or churches to support.³⁹

³⁶Mel Rees, *Biblical Principles for Giving and Living* (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1995), 29.

³⁷Ibid., 28.

³⁸Carpenter, *Tithe*, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 862.

³⁹Ibid., 29.

6. Blessings. As God Himself makes clear in the prophet Malachi, there are rich blessings reserved for those who, with repentant hearts,⁴⁰ are faithful to God in tithing. Hence, tithing is not for the rich only, while those with limited or meager resources are exempt. All are held accountable. The miracle is that God will bless the remaining nineteenth in such a marvelous way that it is worth more than the ten-tenths! To withhold the one-tenth is stealing from God and invokes a divine curse. The truth taught here is that while God does not need our resources, it is our allegiance to Him, our recognition of the steward/Owner relationship, which brings invaluable blessings.

7. However, a danger that must be avoided is the “give-to-get” theme. Christian stewardship is not to be motivated by seeking for personal gain. As Charlie W. Shedd says insightfully, “God’s blessings are never wages for keeping God’s commandments.”⁴¹ And while God has invited us to test Him it is wise to realize that we “cannot presume on God’s goodness. We can test him only when he invites us. There is a great danger in testing God when our hearts are not right (Mal. 3:15).”⁴²

8. Thanksgiving. From the earliest example of tithing we learn that this is purely a voluntary act of thanksgiving. “As a response to the blessings of God-as an act of thanksgiving, praise, and worship- Abram tithed, that is, gave a tenth of everything he had.”⁴³ The same may be said of Jacob.⁴⁴ Thus, generations before the law was mandated in the Mosaic covenant, the “first expressions of tithing

⁴⁰An important inference is that if we refuse to repent of any known sin, yet remit tithe, we are actually unfaithful, and hence, simply losing money. The blessings, whatever form they may take, are for the repentant. This is further corroborated in Jesus’ parable of the Pharisee and publican (Luke 18). Even though the Pharisee was careful to tithe of all he possessed, because of his proud, unrepentant heart, he did not receive the blessing of justification in the sight of God.

⁴¹Charlie W. Shedd, *How to Develop a Tithing Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1961), 30.

⁴²Smith, Micah-Malachi, 334.

⁴³Watley, *Bring The Whole Tithe*, 13.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 19.

were expressions of thanksgiving and faith, not law.”⁴⁵ For this purpose tithing is regularly used in association with freewill offerings (Deut. 12: 6, 11, 17; Neh. 10:37-39; 10:44; Mal. 3:8).⁴⁶ In short, our attitude of thanksgiving to God for the blessings he has bestowed on us acts as a barometer of our gratefulness to him. This is the intent of Jesus’ teaching, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). Within the largest of God’s gift of eternal life (John 3:16), our hearts overflow with gratitude and liberality proportionate to the way in which He has prospered us. While the tithe is mandated by God, our freewill offerings demonstrate the level of our gratitude. To this end, we must avoid the mistaken idea that ten percent relieves us of further duty. Therefore, “When the term ‘tithes and offerings’ was fully understood, it required ten per cent as ‘belonging to the Lord’ and the offering as an over-and-above gift in addition to the tithe. It would be a mistake for any Christian to think of the tithe as a maximum.”⁴⁷

9.Relevance. Finally, the principle of continuity as described above, highlights the fact that tithing is nowhere abrogated in Scripture. Some people avoid tithing by claiming that it was a purely OT directive and/or mandated for the Jewish nation only. However, the fact that Abraham and Jacob knew and practiced it long before there was a single Jew alive dismisses this argument. Further, that Jesus knew about and never condemned this sacred institution indicates that He held it in high esteem. Again, since Paul upholds the same it is indicative that the NT upholds the tithing principle.

Tithing is a beautiful and simple gift that God has instituted perhaps even before recorded history. God requires the minimum: ten percent of our income is to be set apart as a vow to the Lord. While this is a legal mandate, the heart of gratitude does not have to be motivated by law; rather it is a response of thanksgiving. Faithfulness is the key. It brings an overflow of blessings from the Lord.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶By some accounts the ancient Israelites contributed a further 23% of their income, beyond the mandatory 10% tithe, as offerings for the work of the Lord, especially in the maintenance of the sanctuary, and later, the temple. See Paul G. Smith, *Managing God's Goods* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Assoc., 1973), 115-19.

⁴⁷Shedd, 31.

It is not to overstate the case that God does not need our money. The Creator of everything, who wields sovereignty over all, does not depend on the meager resources of created beings. Motivated by love God instituted tithing as a protection for humankind from greed, pride, self-dependence, and ultimately, self-destruction. In this way we are never forgetful of our stewardship relation to God. When we tithe our income, as well as give a freewill offering, we are constantly reminded that God is the Owner of us and of all that we possess. Tithe and offering are brought to the Owner rather than given by the owners. We are merely mangers.

Biblical and Theological Sacrifice

There are two areas of the definition of sacrifice that will be considered as the writer looked at the impact it has had or is having, that gives birth to the crises of the clergy/spouse of the South central Conference. Cruden's Concordance defines sacrifice (animal) as an offering to any deity, with the idea of procuring favor or avoiding disaster, and is deeply rooted in the instincts of humanity, which are found among every race at the earliest known period of human history.⁴⁸ Another states that,

sacrifice is the ritual through which the Hebrew people offered the blood or the flesh of an animal to God as a "substitute payment" for their sin. Sacrifice and sacrificing originated in the Garden of Eden immediately following the FALL of man. Adam and Eve made loincloths of leaves to cover their sinfulness, and then hid from God because their provision was inadequate in their own minds. God then killed animals and made larger tunics for Adam and Eve. God's covering covered men adequately, while man's covering was insufficient.⁴⁹

This particular definition is associated with the offerings at the ancient brick alters, the temples, the tabernacle sanctuary, and sacrifices that were offered at other

locations. Many of these sacrifices that involved animals are identified throughout the entire Old Testament of the Bible: Examples of this type of sacrifice are: the sacrifice by Adam in Genesis chapter 4, Abraham in Genesis 22, the priests in Leviticus 3, and others.

The second definition of sacrifice is, “to suffer loss, give up, renounce, or destroy for an ideal belief, or end.”³ This is the definition that will be focused on during the intervention because it can be associated with the labors and commitment of those called to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ (clergy).

The writer has observed that the words sacrifice, serving, ministering, and offering, all have practical meanings throughout scripture as indicated by the following texts and translations. Some of these are:

Sacrifice, is used uniformly in the New Testament, the thing sacrificed. Service, see on ministration, Luke 1:23, and see on ministered, Acts 13:2. In the Old Testament, used habitually of the ministry of priests and Levites; also of Samuel's service to God; 1Sam. 2:18; 1Sam. 3:1. Of service to men, 1Kig. 1:4, 1Kig. 1:15. In the apostolic writings this and its kindred words are used of services to both God and man. See Rom. 13:6; Rom. 15:16; Luke 1:23; Rom. 15:27; 2Cor. 9:12; Phi. 2:25.⁴ Also included in these is Phil. 2:25 which is one of the scriptures I will be focusing which states, “He that ministered (λειτουργὸν) which is also kindred with λειτουργία service.”⁵

There are some Divine directives that need to be considered which are mentioned above that involve sacrifice and service that should be examined for this project.

³Merriam-Webster, Inc, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* Eleventh ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.), 2003.

⁴Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies In the New Testament, Epistle to Philippians*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1977), 440.

⁵*Ibid.*

Romans 12:1

Here is a call for believers to present their bodies and their lives as a *Living Sacrifice unto God*. This is accomplished by not conforming to the sinful ways of the world, but by being transformed by the renewing of the mind to the perfect will of God. Lives that are consecrated to God, and agree with God's will above the ways of the world are seen as being *Living Sacrifices to God*.⁶

Philippians 2: 17

This particular passage seems to provide the clearest and deepest view of sacrifice as it relates to ministry. Hence, the writer will focus on this text in its entirety. It reads, "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all".⁷ It is here that Vincent maintains, the figure is that of a sacrifice, in which the Philippians are the priests, offering their faith (with emphasis on faith), to God, and Paul's life is the libation poured out at this offering.⁸

Yea, and if I be offered in the text is translated *poured forth*.⁹ The mention of Paul's labors in the behalf of the Philippians, in the previous verse, seems to suggest the sufferings that Paul was likely yet to endure on their account. He had labored for their salvation and had exposed himself to peril that the Philippians and others might have the gospel. On their account he had suffered much; he had been made a prisoner at Rome; and there was a possibility, if not a probability, that his life might be a forfeit for his

⁶Marvin R. Vincent. D.D. *Word Studies In The New Testament, Epistle to Philippians*, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1977).

⁷Phil 2:14.

⁸ Vincent, *Word Studies In The New Testament, Epistle to Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI., William B. Eerdmans, 1977), 440.

⁹Phil 2:14.

labors in their behalf. Yet he says that, even if this should happen, he would not regret it, but it would be a source of joy.

The word that is used here, Vincent elevates is, “σπένδομαι” spendomai - properly means, to pour out, to make a libation; and is commonly used, in the classic writers, in connection with sacrifices. It refers to a drink-offering, where one who was about to offer a sacrifice, or to present a drink-offering to the gods, before he tasted of it himself, poured out apart of it on the altar. Passow. It is used also to denote the fact that, when an animal was about to be slain in sacrifice, wine was poured on it as a solemn act of devoting it to God; compare Num. 15:5; Num. 28:7, Num. 28:14.”¹⁰

In like manner, Paul may have regarded himself as a victim prepared for the sacrifice. In the New Testament it is found only in this place, and in 2Tim. 4:6, where it is rendered, *I am ready to be offered*.¹¹ It does not here mean that Paul really expected to be a sacrifice, or to make expiation for sin by his death; but that he might be called to pour out his blood, or to offer up his life as if he were a sacrifice, or an offering to God. We have a similar use of language, when we say that a man sacrifices himself for his friends or his country.

Upon the sacrifice – “ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ” *epi te thusia*. Here the word rendered as *sacrifice*, means:

- (1) The act of sacrificing;
- (2) The victim that is offered; and,
- (3) Any oblation or offering.¹²

¹⁰Vincent. *Word Studies In The New Testament*, 440.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

Robinson's Lexicon sheds more valuable light on these words when it states,

Here it must be used in the latter sense, and is connected with "faith" - "the sacrifice of your faith." The reference is probably to the faith, i. e., the religion of the Philippians, regarded as a sacrifice or an offering to God; the worship which they rendered to Him. The idea of Paul is, that if, in order to render that offering what it should be - to make it as complete and acceptable to God as possible - it were necessary for him to die, pouring out his blood, and strength, and life, as wine was poured out to prepare a sacrifice for the altar and make it complete, he would not refuse to do it, but would rejoice in the opportunity. He seems to have regarded them as engaged in making an offering of faith, and as endeavoring to make the offering complete and acceptable.¹³

And service - λειτουργία leitourgia - a word taken from an act of worship, or public service, and especially the ministry of those engaged in offering sacrifices;

Luke 1:23; Hebrews 8:6.¹⁴ Here it means, according to Barnes,

the ministering or service which the Philippians rendered to God; the worship which they offered, the essential element of which was faith. Paul was willing to endure anything, even to suffer death in their cause, if it would tend to make their "service" more pure, spiritual, and acceptable to God. The meaning of the whole is: (1) That the sufferings and dangers which he now experienced were in their cause, and on their behalf; and, (2) That he was willing to lay down his life, if their piety would be promoted, and their worship be rendered more pure and acceptable to God."¹⁵

The writers interpretation of the Philippians 2:17, is that the Apostle Paul had offered himself as a sacrifice for service. However, the text is inclusive of Paul and all that dedicate their lives to the ministry of the gospel. They like Paul should willingly sacrifice themselves to proclaim the Gospel, publish the Gospel and do the work of

¹³Robinson Lexicon. Phillipians 2:17.

¹⁴ Vincent, *Word Studies In The New Testament*, 440.

¹⁵Barnes, Albert. Barnes Notes. Explanatory and Practical, on the Epistle to the Philippians: Designed for Bible Classes and Sunday Schools, Harper Brothers Publishing, Copyright 2001-2009.

saving souls for Christ. They are to go where His Spirit directs, and minister as His Spirit empowers. They are willing to endure hardships, accept any challenge, bear any burden, minister to anyone, and serve in any situation. In short they will give their all for the advancement and triumph of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were not forced to sacrifice, but they chose to make various personal sacrifices to help champion the case of Jesus Christ.

The Theology Of Sacrifice And South Central

The remuneration package and the moving allowance of the South central Conference is mandated by the parent organization (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist), and is established on the Biblical paradigm of sacrifice. However, there is no reference in its Remuneration Handbook to a Bible text, nor an interpretation thereof. Still the parent organization along with South central appear to aggressively emphasize and implement sacrifice in the area of finances, yet sacrifice is also inclusive of the entire life of the servant of Christ. Hence, an understanding of South central Conference's philosophy and theology of sacrifice is of utmost importance to be better prepared to address the crises that have grown out of it and have impacted the clergy and spouse.

According to the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists and South central Conference, "the objective of the denominational remuneration scale is to provide employees with an adequate income while endeavoring to provide a reasonable level of

comfort.”¹⁶ When I consider this objective with the philosophy of the remuneration package, and moving allowance which,

is predicated upon the fact that a spirit of sacrifice and dedication should mark all denominational employees irrespective of the position they hold or the department or service they represent; and that the work of the Church, including denominational organizations, is a mission to which lives are dedicated in selfless service,¹⁷

they both are founded on sacrifice. However, their interpretation of sacrifice seems to be primarily on the part of its clergy, and less on the part of the organization and its administrators. The clergy of the conference are the individuals required to do the majority of sacrificing, and are expected to look at ministry as solely a missionary endeavor, no matter the financial deficiencies placed on them, their families, and the trickledown effect it has on their congregations.

The writer is of the opinion that the conference has an antiquated view of sacrifice, because it has not been altered since its inception, which means it is not applicable in this postmodern era, although there are contemporary cultural challenges that involve clergy, congregations and the communities they serve. Clergy and their congregations are confronted with the dilemma of ministering to those living in the inner city and rural communities that are being strapped by the country's financial crunch. This has lead to our communities being in need of shelter, clothing, food, and family support, along with spiritual direction. Hence, clergy and their congregations are seeking to become more equipped not only financially, but also educationally, and emotionally in

¹⁶Remuneration Scales Handbook of January 2003, 1.

¹⁷Ibid., 1.

order to comprehensively commit to community outreach from the perspective of meeting their needs in the above areas. This is true sacrifice, and the involvement of the conference and administrators is extremely limited in these arenas. They often give direction from their plush offices but provide minimal assistance in the downtrodden neighborhoods, neither with their presence nor financial support. This becomes frustrating and is more detrimental than helpful in ministry for clergy, congregations, and the communities of this conference.

However, the conference's concept of sacrifice does not only affect the congregation and the community, but also its clergy financially. The clergy of the conference is required to sacrifice and live only on the income (salary) provided by the organization, no matter their living locations, size of their congregations, educational attainments, or the number of years in ministry. The policies associated with sacrifice do not allow for working outside of the conference to provide supplemental income. These requirements and demands seem to deprive clergy of the freedom to choose, when it comes to sacrificing for ministry and sacrificing financially, which is contrary to the paragon provided by our Christ.

CHRIST AND SACRIFICE

Every act in the life of Christ was an example of absolute sacrifice. Christ could have chosen not to become like us, and make the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf but He chose to do just that for us. The Bible tells us,

He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, He set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become

human, He stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling (sacrificial) process.”¹⁸

Christ died on Calvary, and since we preach Calvary, and teach Calvary, it appears that we should model the sacrifice exemplified at Calvary. It is one thing to sacrifice self (time, talent and energy) when you do not have access to financial revenue, but to have time, talent, energy and financial revenue to sacrifice, and choose, or make decisions not to sacrifice is totally different. When the administration of the conference has these at their disposal, and can prevent its clergy from having to sacrifice what is needed to provide for their families, it causes unwarranted frustration. Should those that do not have enough, be required to sacrifice that which is needed? This leads to crisis not only external but internal, which mirrors what Jesus experienced when He died on Calvary for man. He died, not from the physical afflictions perpetrated by evil men, but from a broken heart.¹⁹

The One who initiated the process of giving up, made the decision, and was not demanded to make the sacrifice by an overseer, or anyone else. It was His choice, His desire to fulfill the requirements necessary to save the world. Jesus chose to be born, to live an exemplary life on earth, to become the sacrificial lamb on Calvary, to die in the sinner’s stead. It was the will of Jesus, to carry these out, from His birth in a manger to His death on a Cross. He often referenced His wiliness to sacrifice for others, meaning sinners, in His sayings:

¹⁸Phillippians 2:6,7,8. The Message.

¹⁹Taylor G. Bunch, *Behold The Man*, (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1946), 176.

- Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.²⁰
- ...I come to do thy will, O God.²¹
- I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.²²

Although Christ continually exhibited the sacrifices He was willing to make for us, He never asked us to sacrifice financially at the expense of our families. Matter of fact, throughout the New Testament the writers seem to promote that those sharing the Gospel should never need to be able to adequately meet the financial needs of their families from the preaching of the Gospel. Some examples are:

- If anyone doesn't take care of his own relatives, especially his immediate family, he has denied the Christian faith and is worse than an unbeliever.²³
- Don't muzzle a working ox," and, "A worker deserves his pay."²⁴
- Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."²⁵

These passages support the biblical concept of sacrificial service, but also promotes that there is a responsibility to provide adequate financial support for those that proclaim the Gospel. The later appears to be the challenge for the South central Conference.

²⁰Luke 22:42.

²¹Hebrews 10:9.

²²John 10:14, 15

²³1 Tm 5:8, (God's Word Bible).

²⁴1 Tm 5:18. (The Message Bible).

²⁵1 Cor 9:14.

South Central And Its Implementation Of Sacrifice

When the writer compare how the conference implements its theology of sacrifice, with the sacrificial service of Christ, he seea a need for more balance between sacrifice on the part of the clergy, and the necessary sacrificial assistance needed from the conference on the part of its clergy. In order for balance to occur, it must include such components as, time spent associated with ministry, talents used for ministry, dedication to ministry, in addition to any financial assistance from the conference especially in the realms of an adequate moving allowance, and the remuneration/salary package. This balance is of utmost importance because of the conference policy that mandates that its employees that include clergy, cannot be employed outside of the denomination, and continue to be employed by the denomination. Because of this policy it obligates the conference to be the facilitator when it comes to sacrificing, by attempting to meet the necessary needs of its clergy. This can began to be accomplished by making adequate adjustments in the following two areas.

1. The moving allowance must be based on the following:
 - The economic conditions of the city in which one will be relocated
 - The housing market
 - The expense to enroll children into new educational institutions
 - The job market for the spouse
 - The expense anticipated for travel to secure housing prior to the move

- The added expense for transferring utilities resulting from the move
 - The expense for license for automobiles
2. The remuneration package must be based on the following:
- The economic conditions of the city in which one is living or to which one will be relocated
 - The size of the congregation which will have an impact on the finances needed to serve that congregation
 - The size of the city which will impact the expense of transportation expenditures
 - The expectations of the conference as a result of the congregation being pastored

However, the conference and clergy need to be assisted by the congregation of the one that is relocated, because ministry and sacrifice is a joint venture and all are to be participants. The congregation has to be committed to make the financial sacrifices required to assist the newly assigned clergy person to promote the mission of the congregation as its spiritual leader, so that one can perform at his/her maximum.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

The hypothesis that was tested is that in the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist there are clergy and spouses that are experiencing or have experienced crises due to the inadequacies of the compensation and moving allowance packages. The crises could be addressed through small group intervention. The methodology used to test the soundness of the hypothesis was through *Qualitative Action Research*. An eclectic approach borrowing from *Behavioral Modification and Growth through Small Groups*, along with, *Stages and Tasks of Strategic Counseling* has been utilized.

The primary features of the model that was used in the implementation emphasized the following:

- I. Assessment
- II. Planning
- III. Intervention
- IV. Evaluation component

Assessment

The intervention model used comprises of a combination of the principles obtained from *Behavioral Modification, Small Group Therapies*, and *Stages and Tasks of Strategic Counseling*. These principles were interwoven throughout the intervention process. The participants in the intervention procedure included pastors and/or their

spouses. At least one of the two needed to be employed in the South central Conference to become members of the intervention groups that were established in their cities of residence, with the intent of addressing reactions concerning their experiences with the compensation (salary) package, and the moving allowance in the areas of crises, through radical listening and communication.

Howard Clinbell's belief that there are four phases in the development of a personal crisis that is listed below assisted me in the assessment process.

- (1) The problem (stimulus) causes tension in the organism that mobilizes the person's habitual problem-solving responses.
- (2) Failure of these responses and the continuing unmet needs produce inner disturbance, including feelings of anxiety, confusion, guilt, ineffectuality, and some degree of disorganization of functioning.
- (3) When the tension of the seemingly insoluble problem passes certain threshold, it becomes a powerful stimulus to the mobilization of additional crisis-meeting resources. The individual calls on his reserves of strength and of emergency problem-solving mechanisms. He uses novel methods to attack the problem... He may gradually define the problem in a new way, so that it comes within the range of previous experience. Aspects of the problem which were neglected may not be brought into awareness, with the consequent linking with capacities and accessory problem-solving techniques which were previously neglected as irrelevant... There may be active resignation and giving up of certain aspects of goals as unattainable. He may explore by trial and error, either in action or in abstract thought, which avenues are open and which closed. Thus the problem may be solved or avoided by resignation.
- (4) If the problem is not resolved, the inner stress of unmet needs mounds mounts until it reaches another threshold-the breaking point where major personality disorganization (psychological, psychosomatic, interpersonal, or spiritual illness) occurs.¹

¹Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), 186.

In order to identify pastors and their spouses that are experiencing crises, or have experienced crises due to the compensation package and/or the moving allowance of the South Central Conference, the focus group completed a questionnaire that contained nineteen questions. The questions that made up the questionnaire were developed with the assistance of Pastor Benjamin Jones, of Huntsville, Alabama, one of the context associates, and Dr. William T. Cox, one of my professional associates. The questions that made up the questionnaire were obtained from numerous sources containing examples of surveys. One such source was *Crisis Counseling*, where the author shares a list of nine distinctive of crisis presented by Dr. D. J. Swartz, a Christian psychologist. They are: (1) A sense of bewilderment; (2) A sense of danger; (3) A sense of confusion; (4) A sense of impasse; (5) A sense of desperation; (6) A sense of apathy; (7) A sense of helplessness; (8) A sense of urgency; and (9) A sense of discomfort.²

The questionnaire/survey included a cover sheet explaining its purpose and the guidelines in answering the questions. This introductory information did not influence the individuals participating in the survey. A time schedule also appeared expressing the importance of returning the questionnaire expeditiously.

There were eighty clergy in the South Central Conference, according to the statistical information obtained from the conference secretary's office, of which only seventeen of the clergy meet the criterion to take the survey, which was determined by the following:

1. They were ordained to the Gospel Ministry
2. They had at least 5 years pastoral experience
3. They were pastoring congregations of 500 or more members

²Norman H. Wright, *Crisis Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 35.

After receiving the completed questionnaires/surveys from the pastors and their spouses (only 36 percentages responded) the questionnaires/surveys were forwarded to a professional statistician. After an analysis of the data by the statistician, the results identified the clergy and/or spouses who were experiencing or had experienced crises due to the compensation and/or moving allowance package. Upon receipt of the findings, those that fitted into the crises number were solicited via email, telephone or email to become participants in the intervention process.

Those that accepted to become participants in the intervention were then interviewed as follows:

1. Informing them of the results from the pre-intervention questionnaire/survey.
2. Informing each participant of the guidelines.
3. Requested each participant to identify some goals they desired to accomplish as a result of participating in the intervention process.
4. Requested verbal agreement to follow the written directives and sign an agreement to the same.

The individuals that consented to become involved in the intervention were interviewed and at that time each participant was informed of the results from their pre-questionnaire instrument, which identified those who had experienced or that were experiencing crisis associated with the compensation or moving allowance package. As a part of the interview each participant was instructed of the guidelines of the intervention. Emphasis was on the importance of strict adherence of the guidelines set forth. Participants were engaged in conversation that identified goals they desired to accomplish during the sessions. I requested they verbally agree with the directives set forth and sign a written agreement to the same. A portion of the document committed

each individual to attend all three sessions and complete an exit questionnaire before the termination of the intervention process.

Planning

It is here that the framing of the sessions for the participants took place through the following:

- Establishing norms for the group
- Education
- Seeking solutions to problems
- Behavior Modification

The objectives were:

- To obtain the signing of a document stating the wiliness of each participant in
- the caring group process
- To obtain the commitment of the each participant to attend all sessions, and follow all guidelines
- To provide a behaviorally specific description of the participant's crisis

Methods used to achieve the objectives:

- An orientation of the purpose and process of the project during the initial interview. Prior to the intake interview each prospective group member will complete a questionnaire.
- An initial written commitment document was issued to each participant. The purpose of that was to share the conditions with all group members, and their agreement to abide by these conditions. The agreement was again confirmed during the first group session.

- There were guidelines provided the participants to assist in the engagement process during the initial session: Each person was expected to attend and share openly during discussions, focusing on current and/or past crises experiences. They were encouraged to participate in the problem solving process.
- As problems were described each person was encouraged to relate their emotions and feelings utilizing behaviors that were born because of their reactions.

Intervention

The intervention for this project was founded on Colson's definition that, "Crisis intervention is a process used to interrupt and/or positively impact a person's immediate crisis reaction. Sometimes called emotional first aid, crisis intervention involves the use of verbal and nonverbal communication to encourage, empower, and build confidence in those who experience a crisis."³

- The ultimate goals of the intervention were:
- To provide relief of the participant's pain
- To provide three sessions to address concerns that manifest themselves resulting from their crises
- To provide assistance for participants in regaining old coping skills and/or developing new ones
- To provide help for the participants to express emotions

The intervention took place in four cities (Memphis, Tennessee, Birmingham and Huntsville, Alabama, and Jackson, Mississippi) of the South Central Conference. The pastoral care-giving process was a compilation of one session held on three successive days in each of the four cities. The duration for the intervention process was eight weeks.

³Charles Colson, *Helping a Neighbor in Crisis* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishing Inc., 1997), 9.

The intervention implemented was founded on David G. Benner's "Three Stages and Tasks of Strategic Pastoral Counseling", described as "encounter, engagement, and disengagement."⁴ Although they are different from the more common description of care and counseling stages, which are associated with, task oriented terms such as goal structure problem solving, and intervention, these still sufficed for guidance in the area of crises addressed.

⁴ David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1998), 63.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Stages and Tasks of Pastoral Care Used During the Intervention

Below are the three stages and tasks that David G. Benner summarized, and that transpired during each pastoral care sessions of the intervention is also provided.¹

The Encounter Stage

- Joining and boundary setting
- Exploring the central concerns
- Achieving a mutually agreeable focus for sessions
- Assessing the crises begins

The Engagement Stage

- Continued assessing crises
- Exploring the affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of the problems
- Identifying the resources for coping or change

The Disengagement Stage

- Evaluating progress
- Assessing remaining concerns
- Terminating of session

¹David G. Brenner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 64.

The following is a description of the intervention during each of the three sessions. The intervention focused in the area of pastoral care, for the participants experiencing crises resulting from the compensation package and/or moving allowance, which may have arisen in the lives of the clergy/spouse, and is or has affected their relationship with the South Central Conference. The writer sought to discover the impact conference policies had on the participants as well. The primary means of accomplishing the above was through asking open-ended questions that encouraged interaction, verbal dialogue and attentive listening. Each session included, praying, caring, and sharing with each other.

First Session

The goal of the first session was to establish personal relationships with the participants that could be maintained throughout all three sessions. Establishing personal relations between the participants was not very difficult, because most of them already had known each other over a number of years, and had worked and attended various pastoral workshops together. They often communicated with one another during their annual Camp meetings and Worker's Meeting. This history among them seemed to establish the foundation that enabled them to communicate freely in this session and continued throughout future sessions.

One strategic component of the first session was to emphasize what Peggy Way refers to as,

Finitude--the condition of being limited--marks the human situation. Mortality, the fact of death, defines the human situation. The human creature perennially encounters peril and precariousness, and theology is grounded in the search to make some sense of that situation and God's participation in it. Some of

the reflections on the events of September 11 reflect dimensions of experiencing the shock of finitude.²

Hence, exploring central concerns in areas, such as, economics, theology, family, ministry, and any relevant history of past or recent events in the lives of those in attendance accomplished this. The first session is identified by David G. Benner as, *The Encounter Stage*, which I have also coined.³

Here that the process of assessing the nature of the crises of the participants began, and continued to some extent through the remaining two sessions. Often new crises situations would come forth during later sessions as the clergy and spouse were sharing their feelings and challenges through the years of ministry in South Central Conference. It should be noted that open and critical conversations about these have not been a part of the history of clergy in relation to the Conference.

During this session, we identified and named the problem/problems in the areas of crisis that were prevalent among the participants. This information was based on the pre questionnaire feedback and through information gleamed through what Nancy Ramsay calls, *careful observation* of what is verbally expressed by the participants in the session.⁴ Benner elaborates on the importance of Ramsay's statement, when he relates this observation to diagnosis when he writes, "diagnosis is an act of discernment, and a

²Peggy Way

³Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 64.

⁴Nancy Ramsay, *Pastoral Diagnosis: A Resource for Ministries of Care and Counseling*, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1998), 9

diagnostic judgment will always be present, either implicitly or explicitly, by the end of the first session.”⁵

Careful observation which includes discernment, was mandatory if the writer was going to address the correct issues when counseling (providing care) according to Pruyser, who contends that, diagnosis is “grasping things as they really are, so as to do the right thing”.⁶ Although this project was primarily focusing on pastoral care (with emphasis on radical listening and communication), these counseling insights were still applicable in the intervention.

In the initial sessions each of the groups identified the primary focus for their entire process. With my assistance, this identification process lead to a formulation of goals for helping the participants to have a different way of viewing chronic problems.

All of the first sessions comprised of one hour and forty-five minutes divided into the following time segments.

- I. Five minutes --- Brief meditation focusing on the purpose of this session
- II. Ten minutes --- Statement about the purpose of the sessions
 1. How the sessions were to be conducted
 2. Defining of terms (crisis, compensation package, moving allowance)

that were used throughout the intervention sessions
- III. Ten minutes --- Sharing the group’s profile based on the pre survey analysis
- IV. Sixty minutes --- Facilitating a discussion about the data and emerging insights (It was my goal to capture the significant points by radically

⁵ Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 71.

⁶ P Pruyser, *The Minister as Diagnostician* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press. 1976), 30.

listening for their theology of economics, and their feelings about the conference policies as they relate to finances and sacrifice)

- V. Twenty minutes --- Summary of new learning from this session by having each participant name one thing they were able to take from the session as I tentatively listened

Second Session

David G. Benner describes the second session as “The Engagement Stage” which is very fitting.⁷ During this session, there was further radical listening, discussion and connecting between the participants and myself as we started to address the crises that brought us together as. The primary tasks of the engagement stage were the exploration of the individual’s feelings, thoughts, and behavioral patterns associated with the central concerns (associated with the crisis they had identified), and the development of new perspectives and strategies for coping or change.⁸ I also attempted to get them to take ownership of their feelings without feeling guilty. In addition to ownership and the exploring of their feelings, we also examined the thoughts underlying those feelings, and the exploration of the behaviors associated with the feelings. My primary objective during this session was to be supportive as the crises were identified and explored thru radically listening.

The expressing of the thoughts, feelings and behaviors resulting from various crises seemed to be an asset to the participants when deciding how to respond to their

⁷Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 78.

⁸Ibid., 79.

feelings, thoughts, and behavior. I attempted to verbally give them permission to feel and take this session as an opportunity to work through those feeling.

This session consisted of one hour and forty-five minutes divided into the following time elements.

- I. Ten minutes --- Brief meditation on the purpose of the session
- II. Five minutes --- Statement about the purpose of the session
- III. Seventy minutes --- Assisted in a discussion that allowed the attendees to express crises in relations to compensation and moving that manifested themselves in their lives and to explore their feelings (The primary responsibility was again to radically listen, however, validation, emotional support, an objective opinion, or perhaps only to share the joys or frustrations of an experience)
- VI. Twenty minutes --- To assist participants in developing new perspectives on strategies of coping and changing their situations resulting from the past and present crises they are/were experiencing.

Third Session

The third and final session focuses on *The Disengagement Stage*(Where do they go from here?).⁹ This was when the final work was completed to prepare for the termination of the intervention. However, prior to termination there was a presentation and discussion on forgiveness. This stage exposed the participants to the possibility of needing to forgive South Central Conference for being the cause of the crises they were

⁹Ibid., 64.

experiencing or had experienced, resulting from the moving allowance and the compensation package.

Following the group's focus on forgiveness, the disengagement process took place. The terminating of the intervention was difficult because of relationships that had developed over the previous sessions, however, it should be made easier by our recognizing that, "neither pastoral care nor pastoral counseling is the encounter or engagement simply of two or more people, but of people with God".¹⁰

It was discovered that the sessions did not resolve everything, yet there needed to be preparation to leave the final session with the understanding that there would be unfinished work to be done. Hence, there was included in this session an identification of difficulties the participants anticipate encountering in the future, and consideration of ways to address them. This was done through dialog from all parties attending the intervention. Emphasis was placed on making a concentrated effort to focus on recognizing the theological issues they should visit.

Finally, a bibliography was supplied for participants' future use, if needed in order to address crises and issues that were associated that were not addressed or did not met their needs satisfactorily.

The time schedule for this final session was also one hour and forty-five minutes and spent as follows:

- I. Five minutes --- Brief meditation focusing on the purpose of this session
- II. Five minutes --- Statement about the purpose of the session
- I. Sixty-five minutes --- Discussion of the concept of whether there is a need to

¹⁰Ibid., 97

Dialogue with the South Central Conference

IV. Ten minutes --- Assessing remaining concerns

V. Twenty minutes --- Completion of post questionnaire

Verbal evaluation of the intervention process

Evaluation

The evaluation component was determined by the response to the post questionnaire approximately three weeks following the last session of each group. This questionnaire was distributed by hand and email and 75 percent of those in the groups returned them. Part of the evaluation was in essay form and designed to provide additional information on how the sessions impacted the participants. The essay also allowed each person to provide written statements on how the intervention sessions affected him or her.

The post questionnaire was used as a tool to further assist the participants by providing them the results of the intervention, as it was compared with the pre questionnaire, which became a means of measuring the effectiveness of the intervention. This eliminated relying on informal or unstructured ways of analyzing the impact of the intervention on the participants. Dr. Scott T. Meier supported the use of such an instrument as the post questionnaire for feedback in pastoral care (counseling) and psychotherapy, when he used an example of its impact in one of his classes. Dr. Meier shared an example of the effectiveness of using what he called the “Outcome Questionnaire” when he referenced the following example:

Lambert and his colleagues (2001) have recently demonstrated the positive effects of feedback with clients who are failing to

make progress in therapy. Using the Outcome Questionnaire (OQ) with university counseling center clients, they examined the effect of providing feedback to therapists with clients making and not making progress in therapy (based on OQ scores). Graphs and progress markers (colored dots that indicated whether the client was functioning in the normal range of OQ scores) were given to therapists to indicate which clients had an adequate rate of change, an inadequate rate of change, or failure to make any progress. Lambert and his colleagues found that OQ scores at termination were higher for clients who were initially not making progress but whose therapist was receiving feedback, compared to clients who were not making progress and whose therapist received no feedback. In fact, clients who were not progressing and whose therapist received no feedback worsened over time.²²

Findings

The model produced was based upon the findings for addressing crises born out of the inadequacies in the compensation package and the moving allowance of the South Central Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination.

Below are the findings from interviews with three ordained non-Seventh-day Adventist clergy, who had a minimum of seven years of experience pastoring congregations comprising of at least 500 members, and located in the territorial states of the South Central Conference. The objective of the interviews was to compare the different remuneration and moving allowance packages. This would provide adequate insight when considering the ethics of the South Central Conference for paying its clergy the same in spite of the congregational size, experiences, and geographic location. I have supplied the cities, the locations of their congregations, their years in ministry, the benefits of their compensation packages, their moving allowances, and other items of

²²This was taken from a discussion of using questionnaire feedback by Dr. Scott T. Meier who is professor and co director of training of the program in counseling/school psychology in the Department of Counseling, School, and Educational Psychology, at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

significance for this project, which contributed valuable insight for this research. The information gleaned from the interviews when studied, supported the need for a paradigm shift as it applies to the salary and moving allowance packages allocated by this conference for its clergy.

First Interview:

City: Mobile, Alabama

Congregation Size: 1100

Years in ministry: 20 years

Years at present pastorate: 16 yrs.

Benefits received:

- Remuneration Package: \$70,000 salary
- Housing was included in salary, but in the pastor's name: The pastor also receives a housing allowance when he files his taxes.
- Household needs were included in the salary such as household maintenance, television cable, lawn care, heat, water, and gas.
- Automobile allotment: \$6,000 per year
- Retirement at age 60: The pastor receives half of his final annual salary for 20 years
- Clothing was to be purchased by congregation up to \$2,000 for two suits and cleaning each year
- \$500 per year for personal development
- Vacation was in increments: 1-4 yrs = 1 week, 5-10 yrs. = 2 weeks, 10-12 yrs. = 3 weeks, and 12 + yrs. = 1 month (All expenses while on vacation are paid by the congregation)
- There were special days honoring the ministry of the pastor such as: Pastor's Church Anniversary, Pastor's Wedding Anniversary,

Pastor's Birthday, and Christmas. The congregation provided the monetary gifts, as they were impressed per special event for the pastor and his spouse. Generally these gifts would average about \$10,000 per year.

- The pastor's wife did not receive any benefits from the church.

Second Interview

The writer needed to preference the finding of this interview by stating that this church was more theocratic than democratic.

City: Memphis, TN.

Congregation Size: 500

Years in ministry: 19 years.

Years at present pastorate: 10 years

Benefits received:

Remuneration: \$700 per month and is paid in cash by the congregation

There church congregation pays the pastor's taxes.

- New automobile every two years
- Mortgage is paid by the congregation

Down payment and closing costs for the purchase of the clergy's house is provided the by congregation

The congregation pays all household expenses including: telephone, cell phone, television cable, lawn care, heat, water, gas and upon retirement the house is given to the pastor

The furnishing of the house is provided by the congregation, but is selected by the pastor and the spouse.

- All of the clothing (ties, shoes, shirts, suits, watches, coats and etc.) for the pastor and spouse is purchased by the congregation

- All maintenance associated with the house and the automobile is the responsibility of the congregation
- The family's groceries are purchased by the congregation
- There were special days honoring the ministry of the Pastor: Pastor's Anniversary, Pastor's Wedding Anniversary, and Pastor's Birthday. The congregation provided the monetary gifts, as they were impressed per special event for the Pastor and spouse.
- The pastor's insurance and retirement package was supplied by the congregation.

Third Interview

City: Memphis, TN.

Congregation Size: 1,800

Years in Ministry: 18

Years at present pastorate: 18

Benefits Received:

Remuneration: \$28,000 per month

Taxes were paid by the pastor annually.

- Housing: The house was purchased by the congregation but was in the pastor's name. The pastor did get a housing allowance when he files his taxes. All household maintenance including the lawn care is paid by the congregation, but the pastor paid the housing insurance.
- Automobile: The congregation supplied an automobile every 3-5 years at the pastor's request. The maintenance and insurance on the vehicle were paid by the congregation, and a gas card was provided.
- Clothing: Pastor's clothing was not provided.
- Family Benefits: The spouse received a gas card, and congregation also paid her dry cleaning expenses. Tuition for the children was paid by the congregation, along with any additional educational expense of the pastor.

- Insurances: Life and hospital insurances for the entire family were paid by the congregation.
- Special Days: The congregation recognized all special days of the family which included: Family member's birthdays, pastor's church anniversary, marriage anniversary, and Christmas. The amounts were not given by the pastor during the interview, but he did mention that on his 50th birthday the congregation gave him \$47,000, as an expression of their appreciation for his commitment and dedication.
- Vacation: The pastor could take his vacation as he desires with no limit of time. The congregation paid all expenses incurred by the family while on vacation.
- Relocation expenses: If there was a reason for relocation, the congregation that hired him would pay all the expenses incurred.
- Retirement: The retirement is provided by the congregation.

As these interviews concluded it was even more revealing that the present remuneration package and moving allowance of the South central Conference are terribly out dated and woefully inadequate to meet the financial needs of its clergy. Another item that presented itself as a result of the interviews was that each congregation compensated the pastor according to the size and needs of the congregation.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

Reflection

The treatment of the hypothesis was found to be true, that the inadequacies of the compensation package and the moving allowance had given birth to crises in the lives of clergy and the spouses of the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, and that:

1. Neither clergy nor their spouses have a forum to express themselves about their financial needs that have resulted from the remuneration package and the moving allowance.
2. Neither the conference nor the parent organization is sensitive to their financial dilemmas.
3. The financial future for the clergy family lies in their hands and not with the organization.

The Biblical and Theological Impact

The difference the biblical and theological insights will have on the moving allowance and the remuneration package if seriously considered by the South Central Conference and the parent organization could cause both entities to revisit their present financial policies. This could have a very favorable impact for all the clergy of the entire Seventh-day Adventist Denomination. The present Biblical and Theological interpretations of the distribution of the tithe as it relates to the clergy (priest) by the conference and the parent organization is questionable at best. There is no scriptural

justification for their present approach to the allocation of the tithe or their concept of sacrifice as it relates to clergy ministering to the people of God.

Overview of the Intervention Sessions

The intervention sessions revealed what some participants were feeling and experiencing as a result of the remuneration package and the moving allowance. Some were glad to discover they were not alone on their journey when it comes to crises associated with the inadequacies of the remuneration package and moving allowance. As the intervention began, the writer observed that clergy dialogued less than their spouses about their financial difficulties (crises), however as the sessions continued, it became apparent that both appreciated this venue for open communication about their commonality. This included having an opportunity to explore a deeper level of feelings resulting from the remuneration package and moving allowance. One spouse provided emotional support and reinforced the need for clergy and spouse to take charge of their own financial futures and cease to be dependent on the conference.

A second spouse said that she and her husband must take full ownership for what has transpired in the past and for what actions they will take that affects their futures. This can be done according to her by making the proper God directed decisions, because the conference has shown no wiliness to make adjustments to help them in the area of finances, and most of their congregations are not economically equipped to assist the clergy substantially enough to have a positive impact on their lifestyles.

The participants stated that it appears that present conference administration is not sensitive to the financial needs of its clergy or spouses. A recent disconcerting example of the wide-ranging effects resulting from the challenges of clergy, specifically the

compensation and the negligible financial assistance from the conference or parent organization during frequent moves during the ministry was when the writer received an email from a colleague's daughter. Her father who pastored for over 30 years experienced a sudden health issue and his condition warranted the support and presence of his family, and the family had to solicit financial support from friends and former congregants across the country. This truly drives home that both the present remuneration package and the moving allowance are antiquated and need to be addressed and altered.

The conference has not initiated an effort to become more creative and flexible to work around the parent organization's policies, in order be to compensate for the inequities of the remuneration and the moving allowance packages of the organization. The writer believes that the administration should pursue constructive methods of educating the congregations of the South Central Conference of the financial needs of its clergy, challenging them to assist the conference in this arena. Of course this would really become revolutionary in light of the history of this conference.

The insights from above along with others revealed through the intervention sessions hopefully will become beneficial to the South Central Conference and the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination regarding its present remuneration package and the moving allowance.

Issues that Evolved from the Project

Some of the prominent issues identified in this project are:

- Should the clergy, their spouse and families be expect to sacrifice in all walks of life for the sake of the gospel ministry at the expense of their families and their futures after retirement since the conference does not provide adequate finances needed for survival?

- The South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventist's remuneration package and moving allowance does not compare with other denominations whose clergy, are pastoring comparable size congregations, with similar experience in ministry, and similar educational backgrounds.
- Is it equitable for clergy who are pastoring congregations of 500 or more in metropolitan cities, to be the recipients of the same remuneration as those pastoring smaller congregations, in smaller cities?
- Why are the clergy of South Central Conference are not allowed to supplement their income by securing additional employment outside of the denomination, when the remuneration is not adequate to meet their financial needs?
- With the expectations of the congregations of the South Central Conference, and the expectations of the administration, how can its clergy succeed in ministry with the present remuneration package and moving allowance, which produces the crisis associated with inadequate finances, without having something in place to address the crises or make changes that are equitable to the needs of the clergy in the packages?
- According to the policies affiliated with the moving allowance should the conference expect its clergy to relocate and experience additional expenditures not hold prior to the assignment being to relocate which not being adequately compensated?
- Perhaps, most important, what should a contemporary biblical and theological understanding of tithing and sacrifice be? And how should it be embodied in equitable and just practices?

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

The solution to the problem associated with the remuneration package and moving allowance must be addressed with those in power. The procedure that could be implemented without being threatening to those in power (Conference leadership) could be as follows:

1. The clergy individually initiate dialogue with the administrators (President, Secretary and Treasurer) at various meetings, such as,

Camp meeting (annual gatherings of the constituents of the Conference) and Worker's meetings (two gatherings of administration with the clergy), and even at other times when the opportunity permits. I am convinced that this should be done initially in private settings, comprising of the individual clergy and the chief administrator. This setting may not be as threatening to conference leadership.

2. Following the individual collaboration, there should be a request to have a general meeting with the clergy and the administration of the conference to discuss the remuneration package and the moving allowance, and the impact they have on their family's lives. This would enable leadership to express their thoughts and receive general feedback from its clergy.

3. A pre-test questionnaire should be distributed among the clergy and their spouse to discover how wide spread the crisis is among all of the conference clergy.

4. The South central Conference Constituents should also be included in process to address the remuneration and moving allowance packages and the negative impact both have on clergy and the spouse. This could be accomplished by sharing the results of the questionnaires with the laity of the conference, through webmail or through the conference newsletter, and following it up by soliciting their input on eliminating the crises.

5. Next there should be a presentation of both packages to the constituents at town hall meetings for the purpose of engagement, and soliciting their participation in establishing a holistic approach to eliminate the crises.

6. After establishing an approach to eliminate the crises, conference administration, its clergy, and constituents can begin to look for alternatives for eliminating the crises, and continue to research the denomination's Biblical and Theological grounding of its financial practices.

One such alternative is for the conference administrators and the pastors to aggressively get involved when it comes to relocating by establishing a team which would include clergy and constituents to explore the best practices to address their financial dilemmas. This team's assignment would include studying various housing markets of the conference, in order to better prepare the clergy for relocating, and to

inform the administration of the financial challenges involved in relocating its clergy.

Research could be done to answer questions such as:

- Would it be to the advantage of the clergy and conference, and the constituents to allow the clergy family 7-10 years of stability in one area before relocation, to eliminate a financial burden on the family?
- Are there members in the prospective newly assigned area that could assist the spouse in finding employment, or is there a job market in her field of expertise?
- What is the overall economy of the new area?

The above steps reveal that it is not just the conference administrator's responsibility to address the problem of crises, but the clergy, along with the constituency of the South Central Conference. A collaborative effort is needed to discover methods to assist clergy to pursue financial solvency.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is imperative that clergy and spouse continually reflect upon the Word of God, instead of long lists of activities and thoughts that may have been part of our old existence, but aren't suited to a contemporary victorious life in Christ. The participants in this project must lay aside any attitudes including anger, jealousy, and self-pity, that may have come about as a result of our past or even our present as it relates to the compensation or moving allowance package. Negativity held in the head or heart can work its way outward like spreading poison, tainting conduct, conversation, and yes, even character.

God offers everyone the right way of thinking in order to keep grace and love flowing. Setting our minds on heavenly things is in fact a choice (Phil 4:8). Consider

Paul, whom the modern church surely sees as a successful statesman of being Christ-like. But his contemporaries would have seen a man repeatedly beaten, jailed, and persecuted. He was often impoverished and many times friendless. And yet, during one of his many prison terms, Paul wrote of his joy, contentment, and unshakable faith in God (vv. 10-19). His life is an awesome expression of a positive faith attitude. He was a man committed to thinking godly thoughts whether his life was marked by blessing or adversity.

However, this does not mean we should bury our heads in the sand of contentment when it comes to the compensation package nor the moving allowance of the South Central Conference. On the contrary, the clergy of South Central must continually keep the compensation and the moving allowance packages in the forefront of the conference administration. This can be accomplished by clergy aggressively moving to build a forum for continuous conversation. Hopefully a positive change should occur from the present to what will be needed in the near future to address the financial needs of the clergy of this conference.

APPENDIX A
PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

Overview of Questionnaire

I would like to express appreciation for you consenting to assist me by participating in this questionnaire. It is an important part of my project which is focusing on the impact of the compensation package and the moving allowance of the South Central Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on its clergy and their spouses. Only ordained clergy pastoring, and their spouses of this conference, serving congregations of at least 500 members will comprise the sampling to participate in this survey.

Information obtained will be solely used as data to substantiate or disprove the hypothesis of this doctoral project. The purpose of your personal information will enable the researcher to communicate with you once feedback is returned from those that will analysis the data.

Once the data has been analyzed I would like to meet with you and discuss the results. I would also, like to meet with you at three different intervals, if at all possible. I will travel to your location at your convenience. Following our three gatherings I am requesting that you take another survey. That post survey will be mailed or emailed.

Definitions:

Remuneration: The remuneration (compensation, salary) package includes all the clergy's income (automobile mileage, automobile depreciation, and retirement which is (\$2,400 per month). Remuneration is not referring to additional monies for the clergy for life insurance, education subsidies, bonuses, or any other funds received by the worker

that is above the monthly income. Neither does the remuneration include social security, federal or state income taxes, paid for the clergy since they are considered, self-employed..

Moving Allowance: This includes only the mileage (.38 per mile), per diem (\$38.00 per day), hotel allotment, and the benefits that the conference provides above the remuneration package when the clergy and his family are relocating to another pastoral assignment within the conference.

PRE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Please check the correct box.

AGE:

35-40 () 40-50 () 51-60 () 61-70 () 70-75 ()

SEX:

F () M ()

Marital Status:

Married () Single () Widowed () Separated () Divorced ()

Relations to Person in Ministry:

Wife () Husband () Daughter () Son ()

Self ()

EDUCATION:

High School () College () Graduate School () Vocational School () Other ()

- I. How many years have you been in ministry or associated (child or spouse) with ministry? _____ years**
- II. Were you part of the pastoral ministry prior to becoming associated with the South central Conference? Yes () No ()**
- III. Were you part of corporate America's working force before becoming affiliated with South central Conference? Yes () No ()**

*****If your answer is yes, go to a, b, and c.**

a. How did your salary in corporate Americ compare with your present salary? Please check the appropriate box.

1. Earned more ()
2. Earned Less ()
3. Earned about the Same ()

b. Were you able to provide financially for your family without crises that developed as a result of your salary?

Yes () No ()

c. How did you feel about your salary? It was:

1. Adequate ()
2. More than Adequate ()
3. Less than Adequate ()

IV. Do you think your present salary is:

1. Adequate ()
2. More than Adequate ()
3. Less than Adequate ()

V. Have you or your family been negatively impacted as a result of the compensation package of the South central Conference?

Yes () No ()

VI. Have you ever felt a sense of guilt, as a result of not being able to financially provide a need or needs for your family?

Yes () No ()

VII. List below any crises experienced resulting from the compensation package of South central. Examples: Purchase of housing; Finding employment, and etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

******If more space is needed, please use a blank sheet of paper at the end of the survey.**

VIII. How many times have you and your family relocated in the years of service in South Central Conference? _____

IX. During your relocating were there any particular hardships that you and your family experienced in the move that was not adequately compensated by the moving allowance? Yes () No ()

X. List any hardships that may have resulted from South Central's moving allowance.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

- XI. If your family has ever experienced financial needs that were not met due to the salary package of South Central Conference, please list below what emotions you felt.**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

******If added space is needed please use the blank sheet of paper at the end of the survey.**

- XII. Please share your comments about how you and your family were impacted the last time you moved.**

Please describe how you feel about the money you are compensated as a minister or family member with reference to the text that says, "... a man that does not take care of his family is family is worst than an infidel."

- XIII. Do you ever sense helplessness as it associates with your compensation package and the moving allowance?**

Yes () No ()

- XIX. With reference to the moving allowance when required to move or receive you monthly check do you ever feel that you have to do something, but don't know what to do about your situation?**

Yes () No ()

APPENDIX B
POST QUESTIONNAIRE

POST QUESTIONNAIRE

Overview of Questionnaire

Hello!

Thanks for sharing your time and providing your input during our sessions. Your participation was greatly needed and very valuable. I gleamed a lot from your insight and sharing. Below is the survey that I committed to send, and hope you will be able to either mail it or email it to me, as soon as possible. I would like each of the spouses to complete a separate survey.

My mailing address is 17322 Ponderosa Pines Dr. Houston, TX. 77090, and my email address is joegrdr@hotmail.com.

May God continue to lead and sustain you, as you hasten His soon coming.

Thanks again!

POST - QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Please check the correct box.

I. Do you sense helplessness as it relates to the compensation package and the moving allowance?

Yes () No ()

II. Were the intervention sessions productive in focusing on the influence the compensation package and moving allowance has had on you and your family?

Yes () No ()

III. Were the sessions long enough to be effective?

Yes () No ()

IV. When required to move or when receiving your monthly check, do you ever feel that you have to do something, but don't know what to do about your financial situation?

Yes () No ()

V. Please list anything positive you may have discovered from the sessions.

VI. Do you hold South central Conference at fault for the financial dilemma you are or have experienced?

Yes () No ()

VII. Please share any insights or concerns you may have as a result of the sessions you participated.

VIII. Please use the next page for added comments.

Comments:

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